UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

*Official Records*

SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE (FOURTH COMMITTEE)
7th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 18 October 1994
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 7th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HUDYMA (Ukraine)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 75: EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION

AGENDA ITEM 74: PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF SMALL STATES

AGENDA ITEM 85: SCIENCE AND PEACE

AGENDA ITEM 86: QUESTION OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE RELEVANT ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

OTHER MATTERS

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of the publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-794, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.4/49/SR.7
5 November 1994
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

94-81641 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 75: EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION (A/49/46; A/C.4/49/L.2)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the members of the Committee to the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation contained in document A/49/46.

2. Mr. GUILLEN (Peru), introducing the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR), said that the report summarized the conclusions of two scientific annexes entitled "Epidemiological studies of radiation carcinogenesis" and "Adaptive responses to radiation in cells and organisms", and provided brief information on its work in studying the effects of radiation on the environment. He also submitted for consideration by the Fourth Committee draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.2 and expressed the hope that as in previous years, it would be adopted by consensus.

3. Mr. KONIK (Poland) said that since its establishment in 1955 the Scientific Committee had prepared reports that were used as reference documents by scientists throughout the world and served as the basis for international and national standards for radiation protection. His delegation commended the valuable contribution by the Scientific Committee to enhancing knowledge of the levels, effects and risks of atomic radiation, welcomed the results achieved by UNSCEAR and its fruitful cooperation with other international bodies including the United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the International Commission on Radiological Protection, and stressed the need to further develop that cooperation. Poland was a sponsor of the draft resolution on the effects of atomic radiation and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

4. Mr. KONG Deyong (China) said that the effects of atomic radiation were closely linked to people's health as well as the issues of environment and development, which caused great concern in the world today.

5. His Government, which attached great importance to environment and development, had, in 1994, adopted and published "China's Agenda 21", an important strategic document aimed at accelerating economic development and promoting social progress at the same time. It also dealt with such an important aspect of the issue as the prevention of hazards to the environment and mankind caused by radioactive waste. The work of the Scientific Committee would be important for implementing that strategy. The Chinese Government was willing, as always, to continue to support the work of that Committee and hoped that, with the support of all Member States, it would make a great contribution to protecting all States against atomic radiation.

6. Mr. CHAUDHRY (Pakistan) said that there was a greater willingness among States to exchange information and cooperate in the maintenance of international

peace and security as well as the enhancement of their economic well-being. Those efforts should aim at not only minimizing the risks, but also promoting the peaceful uses, of nuclear technology for the common benefit of all mankind.

7. Pakistan welcomed the current moratorium on nuclear testing and had consistently supported efforts for the early conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. His country also remained convinced of the need for countries to conclude regional nuclear-test-ban agreements. It had put forward a number of substantive proposals to establish a nuclear non-proliferation regime in South Asia and was prepared to engage in a constructive dialogue to promote that process.

8. His delegation cautioned against the application of discriminatory, inequitable and selective restrictions on the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. It was the responsibility of developed countries to extend maximum assistance to developing countries in harnessing the atom for peaceful uses to enable them to meet the socio-economic requirements of their people. Of equal importance was the exchange of technology and information to ensure nuclear safety, including the provision of spare parts for nuclear facilities established through such cooperation. Pakistan appreciated and shared international concern with regard to nuclear non-proliferation. Nevertheless, the requirements of proper maintenance and acceptable safety standards called for a more balanced, equitable and mutually beneficial pragmatic approach. In that context, his delegation commended the efforts by IAEA to help ensure the flow of information on nuclear safety and believed that maintaining adequate safety standards at nuclear sites world-wide was in the interest of all countries.

9. In conclusion, he pointed out that Pakistan had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.2.

10. Mr. KYRYCHENKO (Ukraine) said that the inclusion of the item entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" on the agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly was an important step. The urgent nature of that question stemmed from the serious consequences of the Chernobyl disaster and the need to expand international cooperation to minimize them.

11. The health of the population that had been affected by the accident was cause for particular concern at the current time. In terms of disease caused by the Chernobyl accident, more than 20,000 persons had been recognized as invalids. At the same time, Ukraine, which was undergoing a process of economic reform, was unable, owing to a lack of diagnostic and medical equipment and medicine, to fully carry out medical and genetic monitoring and provide specialized medical care to the people affected.

12. In the isolated area of the Chernobyl atomic power station, there was a whole range of problems, including those related to the burial of radioactive waste, the condition of the upper dam on the Pripyat River and the real danger of contamination of the Dnepr River. His delegation also pointed out that after the disintegration of the USSR, the basic onus of the problems connected with

making the Ukrytie facility an ecologically safe system had fallen on Ukraine. Referring to the conclusions by participants in the international symposium "Ukrytie Safety - 1994" on the condition of the Ukrytie facility, and the findings by specialists, he said that his country had the following priorities: construction of the Ukrytie-2 facility; resolving the questions related to the safety of the Chernobyl plant; introduction of new capacities at other atomic power plants and closing of the Chernobyl plant; and making the 30-kilometre Chernobyl zone an ecologically safe area.

13. His delegation expressed appreciation to the Commission of the European Union, which was financing the development of the technical and economic basis for the project aimed at stabilizing the Ukrytie facility and building the Ukrytie-2 facility over it. Ukraine valued highly the attention given to the Chernobyl problems by the United Nations, international organizations and governmental bodies. The international community was providing Ukraine with truly invaluable assistance and, for that reason, the results of the scientific research into the effects of radiation on man and the environment should also serve the interests of all mankind. At the current time, 70 projects were being implemented in Ukraine through the United Nations and the European Union and on a bilateral basis. There was a need to ensure clear coordination and priority-based financing of projects that provided maximum practical assistance to the population affected. In that connection, he expressed the hope that the United Nations Coordinator of International Cooperation for Chernobyl would take the necessary steps in that area.

14. His delegation viewed the activities of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation as essential and useful with regard to the dissemination of knowledge on the levels, effects and danger of atomic radiation and called for maintaining the principle of the Committee's scientific independence. At the same time, UNSCEAR was conducting insufficient work in terms of the collection and study of information on atomic and ionizing radiation and analysing its effects on man and the environment.

15. His delegation supported the proposal by the Republic of Belarus on the holding in 1996 in Minsk, under the auspices of UNSCEAR, of an international scientific conference to coincide with the tenth anniversary of the accident at the Chernobyl plant. Lastly, he pointed out that the problems caused by Chernobyl would exist for decades and centuries and overcoming them in the future would require a much greater effort on the part of the world community.

16. Mr. HELLBECK (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union as well as Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden, noted that the Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation had been called upon to play an increasingly important role in providing information, as well as education and protection of the world community because of the wider use in recent years of artificial sources of ionizing radiation in varied applications, and welcomed the Committee's twelfth substantive report (A/49/46), in particular its conclusions on the findings of epidemiological studies of radiation carcinogenesis and adaptive responses to radiation in cells and organisms.

17. The European Union and Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden welcomed the progress achieved by the Scientific Committee during the period under review and appreciated its efficient cooperation with various programmes, organizations and agencies. The further development of science and technology, as well as of the applications of sources of ionizing radiation, necessitated closer cooperation and coordination of research in that field.

18. Mr. VERDIER (Argentina) said that his country attached great significance to the item under discussion. A concrete expression of its interest in the topic was the fact that many environmental groups had disagreed with studies conducted in Argentina concerning the possible establishment of a nuclear-waste storage facility. Argentina also shared the concern of the international community with regard to the recent detonation of a nuclear device in China. That test could jeopardize the moratorium declared by the other nuclear Powers and have unfortunate consequences for the current international climate, which was favourable for conducting negotiations on the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty.

19. The nuclear agreements between Brazil and Argentina and between both countries and the International Atomic Energy Agency had contributed to the full entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco; Argentina's adherence to the guiding principles concerning the export of dual-purpose materials adopted by the Nuclear Suppliers Group was eloquent testimony to the exclusively peaceful nature of the Brazilian-Argentine plan for using nuclear energy. Argentina was closely studying the work of the Scientific Committee, in which it had participated since 1955, and welcomed the Committee's report. As in the past, Argentina was co-sponsoring the relevant draft resolution (A/C.4/49/L.2), and urged other delegations to adopt it by consensus.

20. Mr. TASCHEREAU (Canada) said that Canada fully supported the work of the Scientific Committee and would continue to play an active role in it. The data evaluations performed by the Committee had been most useful to Canada in the development of its own regulations, and Canada urged the continuation of those worthwhile activities. That was why Canada had agreed to co-sponsor the current year's draft resolution. Canada was pleased to note the respect and international gratitude which the Scientific Committee had earned through the high quality of its work.

21. The CHAIRMAN said that Finland had joined the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.2.

AGENDA ITEM 74: PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF SMALL STATES (A/49/353)

22. Mr. ZAKI (Maldives) drew attention to the Secretary-General's report on the protection and security of small States (A/49/353). His delegation made special note of paragraph 8, which stated that the creation of a climate of support that could serve as a basis for protecting the security of small States was of paramount importance. That was a matter of international importance in relation to the purposes and objectives of the Charter and in view of the apprehensions of small States like Maldives which had no resources to defend themselves from external threats or any form of aggression, whether from mercenaries, terrorists

or organized drug-related criminals. The subject before the Committee had gained gravity over the past few years, especially considering the convenience of obtaining weapons of war from international markets and the increase in the incidences of serious internal and cross-border conflicts in many countries throughout the globe. The international community was currently witnessing a fast-rising trend in the recourse to the use of force to settle disputes, an outrageous increase in acts of terrorism, and drug-related criminals were operating on a scale never seen before.

23. Under the Charter, the United Nations had the potential to muster collective security power. Undoubtedly, the political will of Member States, especially the permanent members of the Security Council, had to constitute the driving force behind any arrangement that might be formulated consistent with the Charter and on a universal basis.

24. Some work on that issue had already been done and was continuing. For example, General Assembly resolution 43/78 H of 7 December 1988, the aim of which was to strengthen international peace and security. Furthermore, the revival of the concept of strengthening and enhancing the linkage between regional arrangements and organizations with the United Nations system had been very encouraging in terms of developing the area of confidence-building measures. The development and augmentation of the effectiveness of the Security Council would be of fundamental importance in dealing with the question of the protection and security of small States.

25. Like many small States, Maldives had placed its faith in the United Nations as the guarantor of its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Maldives had had bitter experience at great cost. That was why it considered it of paramount importance to draw the attention of the international community to its plight. At the same time it remained convinced that the purposes and principles of the Charter provided adequate room for action. Maldives had taken steps to include the item in the agenda of the General Assembly in 1989, and with the assistance of a number of other Member States had continued its efforts in 1991. The General Assembly had adopted two resolutions on that item: resolution 44/51 in 1989 and 46/43 in 1991. Both of them had explicitly recognized some salient features of the item. Firstly, small States were particularly vulnerable to external threats and acts of aggression and interference in their internal affairs. Secondly, the protection and security of small States was related to the overall subject of international peace and security. Thirdly, small States had special needs in the exercise of their inherent right to safeguard and maintain their sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Fourthly, mercenaries, terrorists and drug-related criminals and their organizations could be a real danger to small States.

26. Mr. HURST (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the 12 member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the British Commonwealth had undertaken to study the vulnerability of the 19 small States it embraced, and CARICOM attached great importance to the Commonwealth initiative. He applauded Maldives for bringing that question to the attention of the United Nations and

the international community. He wished to focus the debate mainly on external attacks and outside interference in the affairs of small States.

27. Nobody could fail to recognize the importance of protecting small States from bandits, mercenaries, criminals, and drug-smugglers who hatched plots to undermine legitimate authority. He was also aware that the possibility of clashes over border disputes could not be completely eliminated. Eight of the 12 CARICOM countries had formed a regional security system which represented a pooling of their limited resources for collective defence. Recognizing the inability of any one CARICOM State to repel a threat to its territorial integrity, those States were acting on the principle of collective self-defence. They considered it necessary, however, to establish mechanisms embracing several subregions, or mechanisms that could grow out of well-bonded associations that were not regional. Those countries could also engage in larger regional collaboration under the aegis of the United Nations. The CARICOM countries had listened with interest to the views of the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands in his address to the General Assembly when he proposed the establishment of a permanent "fire brigade" capable of rapid deployment in times of urgency. Jamaica had proposed a similar approach three years before, and the 12 CARICOM nations were repeating the proposal at the current meeting.

28. Mr. CHOR (Singapore) said that, while the situation of the small States had substantially improved with the end of the cold war, some of those States which had been courted by the super-Powers had lost the support of their former patrons and were now forced to fend for themselves.

29. Soon after the end of the cold war the Gulf crisis had erupted, provoked by the invasion by a foreign State of the territory of a small Member State, namely Kuwait. Fortunately, the international community and the United Nations had risen swiftly to meet the challenge. In so doing, they had sent an unmistakable signal to would-be regional super-Powers that others' territories were not "up for grabs". It was uncertain, however, whether such collective action would be taken again, should the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other small States be violated.

30. The concern of small States was also related to their frequent inability to mobilize adequate resources to counter external threats. Furthermore, if struck by natural disasters, they were usually unable to cope on their own with the consequences. Furthermore, threats to small States could also take more subtle forms, such as economic pressure. Many small States were also targeted by international terrorists and criminal organizations, arms and drug cartels and armed groups, for their own purposes. In that context, he recalled the invasion and near conquest of Maldives in 1988 by a small group of armed individuals.

31. Small States could take independent measures to strengthen their security. They must be constantly vigilant and forward-looking, in order to minimize errors and maximize their advantages. All States must endeavour to ensure the proper organization of their defence. Similarly, they must establish contingency measures in the event of natural disasters. Thus, in Singapore a citizen civil-defence force had been gradually established, comprising about

4 per cent of the population, to provide emergency functions, such as fire-fighting and rescue services in major incidents.

32. He welcomed the Secretary-General's report (A/49/353), in which the creation of a climate of support that could serve as a basis for prctecting the security of small States was regarded as a task of paramount importance. Where Singapore was concerned, that climate of support was provided by its membership in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). The experience of ASEAN in that area was especially relevant. The countries of South-East Asia, including Singapore, had also signed the Treaty of Amity and had participated in the ASEAN Regional Forum.

33. Small States needed the United Nations, where they could mobilize international support and seek assistance. At the current time they should keep reminding the five permanent members of the Security Council of the need for consistency in upholding the Charter and in implementing resolutions, so that in the event of any aggression, the Organization's reaction would be the same as in Kuwait. It was in the interest of small States - and it was often their only guarantee - to have a strong and effective United Nations, which strictly upheld international law. For their part, small States had the obligation to play an active and constructive role in the United Nations as a whole.

34. The security of small States was not simply a military or political matter. An equally important aspect was the need to help small States to achieve economic self-sufficiency, a key element of which was economic development. In that respect the United Nations and its relevant agencies had an important role to play in ensuring that due attention was accorded to the special needs and concerns of small States in trade and development. The provision of such assistance to small States would be a far-sighted investment in the maintenance of international peace and security.

35. Mr. ERDENECHULUUN (Mongolia) said that his country, like many other small nations, identified its security with the work of the United Nations, which was the primary guarantor of their independence and peaceful development. In that context, greater importance was attached to the ongoing discussions on the reform of the Security Council. In his country's view, ways and means should be found to enhance the effectiveness of the Council's work by widening the participation of small States in its work.

36. The Organization's activities over the past few years testified to the need to improve and strengthen mechanisms for responding to conflict situations. Preventive diplomacy and peacemaking were increasingly important in the maintenance of international peace and security, since, as the Secretary-General had noted, they were highly cost-effective. In addition to United Nations efforts, however, regional arrangements and agencies also possessed a potential that should be utilized in the service of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. In that connection, Mongolia highly appreciated the efforts by ASEAN to promote political dialogue and consultations in the Asia-Pacific region, by initiating the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum, whose first meeting, held in Bangkok in July 1994, had decided to carry out a number of practical confidence-

building measures in the region. Mongolia fully shared the view that the successful implementation of regional cooperation and integration programmes could strengthen the security assurances, the continued economic development and the social progress of small and economically vulnerable countries.

37. Although only a few small States featured among the world's poorest countries, they all faced severe economic problems. They were generally characterized by low income and savings rates, a lack of skilled manpower and, with a few exceptions, a lack of natural resources. Their small populations limited the size of their domestic markets, raising the cost of production and services and hampering economic development. Furthermore, transport and communication were rendered difficult and expensive. As a result, those States were heavily dependent on foreign financial and technical assistance and on foreign markets. The constant threat to economic independence, economic stability and progress caused by those powerful external economic forces underlay most of the security problems of small States. It should not be forgotten, however, that the availability of natural resources could also be the cause of vulnerability, as had happened with Kuwait. Beside economic and military threats, small States might be endangered by environmental factors, demographic and ethnic imbalances, drug-trafficking and other problems. Those non-military aspects of the security of small States should be addressed through extensive and effective international cooperation.

38. In the modern interdependent world, the geographical remoteness of a State was no safeguard. A problem arising in one part of the world could reverberate to its furthest corners. Since the international order depended on the stability and security of small States, the provision of appropriate safeguards was in the interests of all States. That was why the agenda item under consideration was widely accorded such paramount importance, and that too must be borne in mind in restructuring and revitalizing the work of the United Nations, particularly within the context of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council, and in the follow-up to the report "An Agenda for Peace". As a sponsor of the draft resolution on the item, his delegation hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

39. Mr. AL-OTAIBI (Kuwait) said that, not withstanding the atmosphere of détente that now prevailed in international relations, the concern of small States regarding security problems persisted, undermining their hopes of achieving social and economic progress.

40. Kuwait was a small State which pursued a policy of peace and which had never made, and would never make, territorial claims on other States. Its only wish was to live in peace and security, in a climate of confidence and good will, and to maintain relations based on mutual respect, common interests, good neighbourliness and universal adherence to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of international law governing relations between States. It was for that reason that Kuwait had been able to establish friendly relations with the majority of the world's States, the genuineness of which had

been demonstrated at the time of the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990, when many States throughout the world had rallied to the support of Kuwait and had supported its just cause.

41. He noted that for a number of years the situation in the Gulf region had remained unstable, that the security of the States of the region was threatened, and that their hopes for stability remained fragile. The reason for that was the policy of the Iraqi regime and its aggressive conduct. Violations by the Iraqi regime of Security Council resolutions constituted attempts to undermine both the security and independence of Kuwait and of the States of the region as a whole, and also international security. Recalling the recent concentration of Iraqi forces on the border with Kuwait, he said that those actions were evidence of the danger posed by the Iraqi regime, which continued openly to flout the rules of international law, and to violate the provisions of Security Council resolutions concerning its acts of aggression and the terms of the cease-fire laid down in Security Council resolution 687 (1991), which had been accepted unreservedly by Iraq.

42. He expressed his country's gratitude to those States that had rallied to its support, and to other States and regional organizations that had expressed regret in connection with similar irresponsible acts of provocation. His delegation commended the Security Council for its effective actions in response to the threats by Iraq and, in that connection, alluded to the statement by its President on 10 October 1994 and to Security Council resolution 949 (1994). The firm stance taken by the Council with regard to the security, independence and territorial integrity of Kuwait constituted a commendable approach to preventive diplomacy and evidence of full adherence to the principle of collective security, and was a striking manifestation of the purposes and principles of the United Nations. In that connection, his delegation expressed gratitude to the members of the Security Council on behalf of the people and Government of Kuwait.

43. Referring to the report of the Secretary-General on protection and security of small States, he thanked the Secretary-General for his untiring efforts to maintain international peace and security. His delegation supported the view, expressed in that report, that as the international order could be undermined by the instability or lack of security of small States, it was in the general interest to safeguard their security.

44. In conclusion, he said that his delegation supported the draft resolution submitted by Maldives, and was joining its sponsors.

45. Mr. HELLBECK (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union and of Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden, said that they hoped that the draft resolution which had been submitted would be adopted without a vote, in accordance with the practice followed in previous years. As they had stated at the forty-fourth and forty-sixth sessions of the General Assembly, the European Union and its member States adhered strictly to the principle of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, irrespective of their size, and also to the other principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. All those

principles applied equally to all States. Strict adherence to the rules of international law was the best guarantee of preserving and reinforcing the security of all States, irrespective of their size.

46. The United Nations was the acknowledged mechanism for the maintenance of international peace and security. Accordingly, the interests of small States were best served by ensuring that the instruments and procedures of the United Nations functioned effectively. However, present-day security matters also required broader cooperation at the regional level; that would substantially reduce the burden on the United Nations in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

47. Mr. MUTAYA (Malaysia) said that the first purpose of the United Nations was the maintenance of international peace and security, and that unconditional respect by all States for all the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including the principles of sovereign equality, non-interference and the peaceful settlement of international disputes, remained at the core of international security.

48. The faithful fulfilment of all obligations under the Charter was vital in order to ensure peace and security. Regrettably, in practice those principles were sometimes violated, and that gave rise to a certain feeling of insecurity, especially among small States. Because of their inherent vulnerability to external threats and interference, small States deserved special attention and support. In recognition of that situation, Malaysia, itself a small State, had been a sponsor of General Assembly resolution 46/43 of 9 December 1991.

49. His delegation agreed with the comment made by the Secretary-General in his report (A/49/353), concerning the importance of "creating an environment of support" to serve as a basis for safeguarding the security of small States. In that regard, the role of the United Nations in promoting the implementation of confidence-building measures was of paramount importance.

50. Regional organizations, too, had a role to play in the maintenance of international peace and security, and their potential in that area should be fully tapped. That arrangement could provide the basis for a rich network of governmental and non-governmental organizations in support of the efforts of the United Nations. Regional dialogue and cooperation would not only serve as a vehicle for the social and economic advancement of the parties, but would also increase their sense of security. That had been the rationale underlying the formation in 1967 of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the activities of which had greatly contributed to the stability and security not only of its members, but also of the region as a whole.

51. The small States themselves also had a role to play in ensuring their own security. However, in order for national Governments to undertake specific strategies and actions, a favourable external environment was important. In that regard the international community must assist in creating resilient economies in the small States which would be capable of bringing about social and economic progress.

52. His delegation fully supported the main thrust of the draft resolution initiated by Maldives, concerning the importance of the full and unconditional respect by all States for all the principles of the Charter. As a strong supporter of the initiative taken by the small States and as a sponsor of the draft resolution, Malaysia urged members of the Committee to adopt it by consensus.

53. Mr. KANAKARATNE (Sri Lanka) said that his delegation wished to convey its appreciation to the Secretary-General for the action he had taken pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 44/51 of 8 December 1989 and 46/43 of 9 December 1991 and for the valuable information and observations he had submitted in his reports (A/46/339 and A/49/353) to assist the Committee's deliberations. His delegation also regarded as particularly valuable the reply of the Government of Maldives of 14 December 1992 in which it had fully explained why small States turned to the United Nations for protection and security.

54. At a plenary meeting of the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, the representative of Sri Lanka had stated that the security and development of small countries like his own depended largely on the United Nations and that the adherence of all Member States to the principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs, mutual respect and equality, the peaceful settlement of disputes and peaceful co-existence was fundamental. That was why Sri Lanka had supported the initiative of Maldives to include the item in the agenda of the General Assembly and why it was a sponsor of the draft resolution submitted under the item.

55. Although the division of the world into two camps and confrontation in international relations belonged to the past, the fears of small States regarding the protection of their sovereignty and territorial integrity had not been allayed but had, rather, increased. In the recent past, small States had been subjected to attacks by the armed forces of more powerful States, as well as by armed mercenaries and terrorists. Such situations more often than not created a threat to peace and security not only in the specific region involved but also more widely. In that connection, it was essential for the United Nations and the Security Council to set up adequate mechanisms to prevent such situations so that such Member States could effectively protect their sovereignty and territorial integrity. In addressing problems relating to the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council should act on the premise that small States were the most vulnerable to external threats and to interference in their internal affairs.

56. It was generally known that small States, in endeavouring to build up their nations on firm economic foundations, inevitably found themselves at a disadvantage in creating and maintaining adequate armed forces since the financial and human resources that were vital for the stabilization of their economies had to be mobilized for purposes of defence. Because of their special circumstances, such small States were not in a position to provide for themselves the military capability to ward off external aggression or interference and, for that reason, their security depended, first, on adherence

by all Member States to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and, second, on the willingness and ability of Member States to come to the assistance of small States that had been victims of violations of those principles by other States.

57. Moreover, the inherent weakness of the socio-economic structure of small States made them a particular prey to the territorial and other ambitions of other States. Since the economies of small States depended on two or more primary products, external aggression exposed them to considerable economic disruption.

58. The question inevitably arose as to the measures that might be taken by the international community to ensure the security of small States. In his report, the Secretary-General drew attention to the guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 43/78 H of 7 December 1988. While he agreed with one of the confidence-building measures, involving the pursuit of regional solutions to regional problems, he said that there had been recent instances of acts of aggression committed against a small State by a State from the same region. In that connection, the General Assembly and the Security Council might study the possibility of setting up machinery for preventive action whereby a small State would give notice of a potential threat to its sovereignty from another State. While he did not wish to minimize the importance of the regional security arrangements envisaged by the Charter, he nevertheless pointed out that, as recent experience showed, acts of aggression had been committed, for one reason or another, by more powerful States within their own region. In such situations, the international community must take expeditious and concerted action to protect a small State which had become the victim of aggression.

59. There were practical difficulties in defining the concept of "small State". Although two obvious criteria for categorizing a State as small were the size of its territory and the size of its population, it could be said that a small State was one which had a very limited defence capacity. A large proportion of the States Members of the United Nations did not possess adequate resources to resist acts of aggression or any threat to their security and they were therefore dependent on appropriate external arrangements. Sri Lanka firmly believed that, with the emergence of a large number of independent sovereign States as a result of the decolonization process, the protection and security of small States had become one of the major responsibilities of the international community. In that connection, it once again called on the United Nations to take special measures to help small Member States to protect their sovereignty, territorial integrity and security. If all Member States committed themselves to unconditional respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations there would be no need for such measures, but until that happened the Security Council and the General Assembly should take the necessary steps to ensure that small States could also enjoy the much-desired and long-awaited goal of universal peace and security.

60. Mr. McKINNON (New Zealand) said that, for his country, as for all small States, the United Nations was important, particularly as a means of ensuring

collective security. The reliance which small States placed on the collective security provisions of the Charter largely determined the Charter's effectiveness. The most important criterion for evaluating the security arrangements of the United Nations was not the additional comfort they gave to large and powerful States but the level of protection they afforded to the small and powerless. The protection and security of small States was not an additional task of the Organization but was at the very core of its purposes and principles.

61. The membership of the Organization now included a large number of small States which were increasingly aware of their common interests and of the benefit of collective action to defend them. Groups such as the Forum of Small States (FOSS) and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) had proved their value. FOSS placed great importance on the principle of the equitable representation of States in the various organs of the United Nations, and AOSIS had made a significant contribution to the preparations for and holding of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States which had been held in Barbados in 1994.

62. Small States had a direct interest in ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the Organization. That was particularly important in connection with the Security Council. The decisions taken by the Council must, to the maximum extent possible, reflect the views of all Member States and reforms which would achieve that end would be very widely supported by small States. The question of enlarging the membership of the Security Council was also important. The majority of small States would have no interest in enlarging the membership of the Council merely for the benefit of large and powerful States. Nor was it desirable to create new categories of States enjoying specific privileges. Given the current membership of the United Nations and the numbers being considered for an expanded Council, it was clear that the majority of small States would still serve infrequently on the Council.

63. In conclusion, he expressed appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on the protection and security of small States and thanked the delegation of Maldives for introducing the draft resolution under consideration, of which New Zealand was a sponsor. It had been useful for the Assembly to take the time to consider the issue under a separate agenda item. It was equally important, however, that it should remain at the centre of attention in the United Nations, and the resolution under consideration would help to achieve that end.

64. Mr. LEUNG (Fiji) said that Fiji was one of the sponsors of the draft resolution introduced by the representative of Maldives and that it associated itself with the comments of the delegations which had spoken in support of the draft resolution. Fiji was a small island State whose isolated geographic position presented ample opportunities for criminal activity. External threats to Fiji's security could stem from international trafficking in drugs, money laundering or the transboundary movement of hazardous wastes through its national waters. Small States usually had common geographic, social and economic characteristics which magnified such threats to their security and

limited their ability to respond rapidly and effectively to the problems which arose.

65. The delegation of Fiji was in favour of the preparation of a programme of action containing concrete measures which could be taken at the regional and international levels. One way of achieving that was in the context of confidence-building measures, and Fiji would welcome further efforts by the Secretary-General to secure adoption of suitable long-term measures. In that connection the granting of observer status in the General Assembly to the South Pacific Forum was welcome because it would provide a link between small States and the United Nations.

66. The draft resolution before the Committee served as a reminder to the international community that the problems of small States needed to be tackled on a continuing basis, and the Fiji delegation hoped that the international system, the shape of which had changed with the ending of the cold war, would duly accommodate the interests of small States. Since they did not have the independent capability to defend themselves against threats to their security, small States had to count on the assistance of the United Nations.

67. The eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization was an opportune moment to reassess the ways in which it could solve the security problems of small States and respond better to their future development needs. It was to be hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

68. Mr. CHANDRA CHALISE (Nepal) said that the Nepalese delegation fully supported the observation made by the Secretary-General in his report (A/49/353) about the paramount importance of creating a climate of support which could serve as a basis for protecting the security of small States. The issue of the security of small States assumed added importance in the context of their inherent vulnerability to threats of a political, social, economic and cultural nature. Enhancement of the preventive capabilities of the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole could provide a better response to such threats. Nepal was firmly convinced that international relations must be built on the principles of respect for territorial integrity, sovereign equality, peaceful settlement of disputes, and the promotion of international cooperation.

69. An effective United Nations was impossible without the confidence of all States, large and small. Small States made up the majority of the membership of the United Nations; they placed special trust in it and, since they lacked adequate means of countering threats to their security, regarded it as the ultimate guarantor of that security. The delegation of Nepal agreed fully that the security of small States could best be safeguarded by enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations, and especially the Security Council, and it had once again supported and co-sponsored the draft resolution introduced by the representative of Maldives.

70. The unbreakable link between peace and development could not be overemphasized. Many small States had to cope with hardships imposed by their difficult geographic position, century-old isolation, limited resource base and

poor infrastructure. Extreme poverty, recurrent natural calamities and, of late, increasing ethnic and social tensions were undermining the peace and stability of small countries and threatening their burgeoning democratization. In the view of the Nepalese delegation, democratization must be complemented by increased international economic cooperation to improve the social and economic living conditions which constituted the foundation underpinning the democracy, freedom and stability of small States.

71. Mr. LAING (Belize) said that the delegation of Belize endorsed the views stated earlier in the meeting by the representative of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the countries of the Caribbean Community. Belize perceived the threats to the security of small States as twofold. Firstly, there were threats of an internal nature. They included the illegal use or threat of force by domestic opponents of the civil order. In international law such threats were generally deemed internal even when there was involvement of mercenaries and other assistance from the outside. Just as serious were such threats as the distribution of drugs and other harmful substances. In view of the inability of small States themselves to provide the necessary defence mechanisms, Belize called upon the United Nations to expand its assistance through the agencies involved in the fight against narcotic drugs.

72. Another internal threat stemmed from the violence and lawlessness learned by young people from the mass information media, especially television. Most small States did not have sufficient resources to counteract such influences, for example by broadcasting their own television programmes. There too, the assistance of the United Nations was needed, in particular the adoption by the General Assembly of appropriate resolutions about the transnational flow of information-technology products which promoted violence and had a negative impact on people's outlook.

73. The second type of security problem consisted of the strictly external threats - when one State directly threatened another. Obviously, the general prescriptions of international law applied to small as well as large States, but the generally accepted remedies were largely useless in the case of small States. Consideration should be given to the possibility of adopting the following measures: further creative development of the concept of preventive diplomacy; confidence-building and the other modalities discussed in "An Agenda for Peace"; intensification of the security dimension in the cooperation of States or groups of States with their former metropolitan countries, for example within the Commonwealth; participation by small States in United Nations peace-keeping activities; and development of trans-regional and subregional mechanisms such as the Forum of the Association of South-East Asian Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

AGENDA ITEM 85: SCIENCE AND PEACE

74. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, since no documents had been issued on the item, its consideration should be deferred to the following meeting.

75. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 86: QUESTION OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE RELEVANT ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

76. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should defer consideration of the item until the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

77. It was so decided.

78. The CHAIRMAN stated that the Committee had thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 86.

79. He suggested that in accordance with the established practice the Committee should request the Rapporteur to submit reports directly to the General Assembly on the items which had been concluded.

80. It was so decided.

OTHER MATTERS

81. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to document A/C.4/49/7, which contained a letter from the President of the General Assembly addressed to the Chairman of the Committee suggesting that Member States should present in writing for transmission to the Fifth Committee their views on the report of the Secretary-General on the restructuring of the Secretariat (A/49/336) submitted under agenda item 105 entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations".

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

*Official Records*

SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE (FOURTH COMMITTEE)
8th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 19 October 1994
at 10 a.m.
New York

# SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 8th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HUDYMA (Ukraine)

later: Mr. MORENO FERNANDEZ (Cuba)
(Vice-Chairman)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 75: EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 74: PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF SMALL STATES (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 85: SCIENCE AND PEACE (continued)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of the publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-794, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.4/49/SR.8
22 November 1994
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

94-81704 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 75: EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION (continued) (A/49/46, A/49/381; A/C.4/49/L.2*)

1. Mr. MOJOUKHOV (Belarus) said that his delegation welcomed the intention of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) to examine in a future report the scientific data on the development of thyroid cancer in locally exposed individuals following the Chernobyl accident. In addition, it supported the Scientific Committee's intention to continue studying the effects of low doses of ionizing radiation and the adaptive response of the human organism to radiation effects. He particularly stressed the importance of preserving the principles of scientific authority and independence of judgement and of ensuring greater transparency in the work of UNSCEAR, particularly in the collection and analysis of reliable scientific data on a broader scale and in providing the public with an unbiased, scientifically sound and highly authoritative assessment of the impact of ionizing radiation on the human organism and the environment. Belarus was ready to expand its cooperation with UNSCEAR on the basis of those principles.

2. For Belarus, the issue under consideration was no ordinary agenda item. The assessment and practical recommendations of UNSCEAR had been and continued to be profoundly influential in development and refinement of the scientific strategy of broad international cooperation to minimize the environmental and medical consequences of the Chernobyl accident, the tenth anniversary of which would be marked in 1996. The after-effects of the so-called peaceful atom were felt by practically every Belarusian family. Research by Belarusian scientists, which had been repeatedly confirmed by international experts, including the World Health Organization (WHO), demonstrated the continued deterioration of the nation's health: malignant tumour morbidity was increasing, children's immune systems had altered, cases of mental disorder and illness were on the increase and the frequency of congenital defects was growing. Along with the steady increase in the number of pregnancy and birth complications, that process had led to negative population growth in a number of regions of Belarus.

3. The scientific institutions and laboratories set up after the Chernobyl accident had amassed extensive material on various aspects of the effects of atomic radiation. Research work was guided by the priorities in the scientific part of the State programme for the elimination of the consequences of the Chernobyl accident. Belarus supported the elaboration of new international radiation safety standards, since such an undertaking was directly relevant to the residence regulations applicable to the local population in contaminated areas. For many years to come, studies would be conducted in the contaminated areas not only of Belarus but also of Ukraine and the Russian Federation on aspects of the radiation protection strategy to be followed in the event of large-scale nuclear disasters, as well as on the impact of atomic radiation on ecosystems and human health. Belarusian scientists would continue to participate actively in the joint implementation of international scientific projects with WHO, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United

Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the European Union and would also conduct bilateral projects with the United States of America, Japan and other countries.

4. Belarus would continue to work for businesslike cooperation with UNSCEAR and was prepared to provide extensive scientific material and the services of its specialists to assist in examining the consequences of the Chernobyl accident. A joint analysis of the materials at his country's disposal with the participation of the authoritative scientists of UNSCEAR would clearly be the best way of gaining an understanding of the behaviour of atomic radiation. The updating and reissue of the part of the 1988 UNSCEAR report dedicated to the first - albeit, in the view of Belarusian scientists and specialists from other countries, not entirely accurate in terms of current realities - international assessment by the United Nations of the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster would now be both timely and scientifically justified. That assessment had been based on such macro-indicators as the total area and population of the former USSR. The new assessment must include the latest data on doses and effects and should evaluate the risks of post-Chernobyl radioactivity for the environment and population in each of the now independent States affected by the consequences of the disaster. Belarusian scientists had already made their initial contribution to such a report by preparing and publishing in 1993 a national report on the full range of post-Chernobyl consequences.

5. In its statement on agenda item 14, "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency", his delegation had proposed the convening in Minsk in 1996, the tenth anniversary of Chernobyl, of an international scientific conference under the auspices of the United Nations and IAEA and with the fullest participation of UNSCEAR. He hoped that the proposal, which had already been supported by Ukraine, would be constructively considered by the United Nations and IAEA.

6. In the context of the general reform of the United Nations, his delegation suggested that the report of UNSCEAR to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session should be devoted to a retrospective analysis of its activity and should also contain proposals for the consideration of the long-term prospects for its work, and not only from the standpoint of its scientific priorities. At the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, Belarus had suggested increasing the membership of UNSCEAR. In rationalizing the agendas of the Main Committees, consideration could also be given to the advisability of moving the item "Effects of atomic radiation" from the Fourth to the Second Committee. Those ideas could also be discussed at a preliminary stage in informal consultations.

7. As a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.2*, Belarus believed that it could be adopted by consensus.

8. Mr. ALVAREZ GOYOAGA (Uruguay), speaking also on agenda item 74, said that conflicts and international tension had an adverse impact on small States. A number of problems had arisen with the definition of small States and the criteria to be applied in assigning a State to one or another category. The very existence of small States depended upon full compliance with the basic principles of international law, as embodied in the Charter of the United

Nations, concerning the sovereign equality of States, their territorial integrity, their obligation not to intervene in the internal affairs of other States, and the peaceful settlement of disputes. His delegation had always spoken in defence of those principles in various United Nations forums.

9. As for the problems outlined in the preambular paragraphs of General Assembly resolution 46/43 of 9 December 1991, the Parliament of Uruguay had completed its ratification of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Uruguay supported the efforts by the international community to prevent terrorism and terrorist acts and had also ratified the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries.

10. He commended UNSCEAR on its report on the effects of atomic radiation. The effects of artificial radiation sources on certain groups of people had serious consequences, since radiation derived from elements which had escaped the control of the people who worked with them. The various means of transporting radioactive substances led to an increase in radiation levels, and such factors as the dumping of toxic radioactive waste and the careless handling of artificial radiation sources were also cause for concern.

11. In conclusion, Uruguay reiterated the proposal made at the previous session on rationalizing the agenda of the Fourth Committee. The agendas of the former Special Political and Fourth Committees had been combined for two successive sessions. It was time to make similar efforts in the other committees. That could be done in an ad hoc open-ended working group or through consultations between the Chairman and interested delegations. His delegation would make specific proposals in that regard.

12. Mr. Moreno Fernandez (Cuba), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

13. Mr. BANSAL (India) said that the work of UNSCEAR provided the public with a balanced perception of the levels, effects and risks of atomic radiation. Its reports were used as reference documents by scientists world wide and served as a basis for international and national standards of radiation protection. The valuable contributions made by the representatives of WHO, IAEA, the International Commission on Radiological Protection and the International Commission on Radiation Units and Measurements should be noted. The Indian delegation was confident that Member States, the specialized agencies and the organizations of the United Nations system would provide in a timely manner information pertinent to the Scientific Committee's research in order to enhance its relevance and value. India had also cooperated closely with UNSCEAR in its work. Indian scientists had participated actively in its annual meetings in Vienna and had made positive contributions in the preparation of its annual reports.

14. India was committed to a policy of using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Nuclear power already accounted for a significant part of the electricity production in half a dozen of India's states where nuclear power plants had been built. India was a leading producer of radioisotopes with

applications in medicine, agriculture and industry. For India, nuclear energy was an important means of accelerating economic development.

15. India was committed to maintaining the highest nuclear safety standards and had been one of the first countries to sign the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which had been opened for signature in Vienna on 20 September 1994. India's Atomic Energy Regulatory Board ensured compliance with regulatory practices at nuclear installations. Radiological protection was an ensured means of plant safety measures accompanied by an extensive environmental surveillance programme. India believed that every State which conscientiously and scrupulously discharged its nuclear safety responsibilities was thereby fulfilling its obligations to the international community as well.

16. India was committed to the goal of universal and complete nuclear disarmament. It was in favour of a comprehensive test-ban treaty and a treaty prohibiting the production of fissile material for weapons as steps towards global nuclear disarmament. The power of the atom should be used only for mankind's progress.

17. Mr. GRIFFIN (Australia) said that in the 39 years of its existence UNSCEAR had competently and efficiently discharged its mandate, serving the international community by providing a scientific environment for evaluating new information and developing new concepts which often found their way into the recommendations of the International Commission on Radiological Protection and thence into national radiation control regulations in many States.

18. Australia had consistently made the point that the work of UNSCEAR had a practical as well as a purely scientific significance since, despite encouraging recent trends, the world remained over-armed with nuclear weapons and nuclear testing continued. The Australian Government remained firmly committed to the objective of complete nuclear disarmament under effective international control. Australia had participated actively in the current negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty in the Conference on Disarmament and urged their speedy conclusion.

19. The Australian Government welcomed the testing moratoriums which a number of nuclear-weapon States had had in place for some time and it urged their continuation. Particularly welcome was the testing moratorium observed by France at its Muroroa test site, and Australia called on the Government of France to end nuclear testing in the South Pacific completely. The continued testing by China, alone among the nuclear-weapon States, was a keen disappointment. Australia urged China to consider the damage which such testing was doing to the current climate of confidence underpinning the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty and to suspend its testing programme.

20. The Australian Government welcomed the accession by China and the Russian Federation to the relevant protocols to the 1985 Treaty on a South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone (the Treaty of Rarotonga). Unfortunately, the United Kingdom, the United States and France had yet to sign and ratify the protocols. Australia renewed its appeal to them to do so without further delay.

21. Speaking in Australia's capacity as current Chairman of the South Pacific Forum, he said that the Forum welcomed the progress made in the negotiation of a convention to ban the import of hazardous wastes into island countries members of the Forum and to control the transboundary movement and management of such wastes in the South Pacific region. The Forum also welcomed the ban on the dumping of radioactive wastes at sea adopted in November 1993 by all but one of the parties to the 1972 London Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter. It expressed its concern at the possibility of continued dumping of radioactive wastes in the North Pacific by the Russian Federation. The Forum reiterated its concern about the risks inherent in the shipment of radioactive materials by Japan and its expectation that such shipments would be made in accordance with all safety and security regulations.

22. Where nuclear weapons were concerned, the South Pacific Forum welcomed the growth in the number of parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and would like the Treaty to be extended indefinitely at the 1995 Review Conference. The Forum welcomed the extension or continuation of their nuclear testing moratoriums by the nuclear-weapon States (except China). It noted that the permanent cessation of testing by France would contribute significantly to improving further the relations between France and the countries of the Forum. The Forum welcomed the commitment of the nuclear-weapon States to negotiate a comprehensive test-ban treaty and called for its early conclusion.

23. Mr. GEORGE (Federated States of Micronesia) said that in his statement in the General Assembly the representative of the Marshall Islands had referred to recently declassified documents of the Government of the United States concerning the detonation of 67 atomic bombs in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The documents suggested that the level of radioactive contamination was different from the level previously reported to the Governments of the region. The Government of the Federated States of Micronesia had asserted that the radioactive fallout from United States atomic testing had not been confined to the Marshall Islands but had possibly extended to territory in the Federated States of Micronesia, including the capital, Pohnpei. It was not unlikely that the rare forms of cancer and other illnesses which had afflicted the local population were the result of atomic radiation following the test explosions in the region.

24. While the debate on the extent and effects of the radioactive fallout continued, it was a matter of record that the radioactive contamination of the region's environment had been devastating, especially for the Marshall Islands, where the tests had taken place. In that connection the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia was deeply concerned about the statement made in the General Assembly by the representative of the Marshall Islands in which he had requested the General Assembly to consider sympathetically his country's efforts to secure the restoration of its lands and the treatment of its people, and had further suggested that a feasibility study should be made for a permanent storage facility for nuclear materials on one of the uninhabited atolls in the Marshall Islands. While fully supporting the rehabilitation of

land in the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia was firmly opposed to the establishment in the region of any kind of storage facility for radioactive wastes.

25. Together with the Marshall Islands and other island States, the Federated States of Micronesia drew the attention of the international community to the vulnerability of small islands States and the importance of their marine resources and environment for their sustainable development. It was in that conviction that the Federated States of Micronesia had assumed the chairmanship of the South Pacific Forum's working group on the draft convention banning hazardous wastes from the region.

26. It supported the view of the representative of the Marshall Islands that the effective disposal of radioactive contaminants required their permanent isolation from the human biosphere. It endorsed the appeal made by the Marshall Islands for the international community, in particular the countries responsible for the detonation of atomic bombs, to assist in the efforts to cleanse the Marshall Islands from radioactive contaminants and ensure their safe disposal.

27. His delegation drew the attention of the members of the Committee to paragraph 8 of draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.2 and requested them to make available to UNSCEAR all information about atomic tests in the South Pacific region, with a view to the preparation of a report on the effects of such tests on the population of the region and the adoption of appropriate measures to overcome the problem.

28. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that the Federated States of Micronesia, Slovakia and the Solomon Islands had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.2.

29. Draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.2 was adopted without a vote.

30. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had thus concluded its consideration of item 75.

AGENDA ITEM 74: PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF SMALL STATES (continued) (A/49/353; A/C.4/49/L.3)

31. Mr. ZAKI (Maldives) introduced draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.3 on behalf of the sponsors and announced that Viet Nam, Oman and Thailand had become sponsors of the draft resolution. The question of the protection and security of small States was handled in the draft resolution in basically the same way as in resolution 46/43 of 9 December 1991, but with a revised paragraph 7. In the sponsors' view, paragraph 7 reflected what had to be done if the question was to be dealt with as carefully and comprehensively as possible.

32. The draft resolution did not attempt to secure any commitments or promises from whatever source. In a rapidly changing world and with the increasing volume of activities undertaken by the United Nations system small States were not insisting on the consideration of the question as a separate agenda item.

Now that a review of the functioning of the whole United Nations system was taking place, the question should be considered by the organs concerned with the reforms. It was essential to take into account in such consideration the full range of preventive, monitoring and even coercive measures for the maintenance of international peace and security.

33. Mr. MOMIN (Brunei Darussalam) said that, small countries faced special challenges stemming from a number of unique circumstances. They were affected by many factors beyond their control and influence. Far more than other countries, they needed a stable and peaceful regional environment in order to develop economically and socially. Brunei Darussalam was a member of a regional association committed to peaceful coexistence and to building among its members a culture of consultation and cooperation and a wide appreciation of each member's needs and capabilities. The delegation of Brunei Darussalam welcomed the fact that the resolution was to be adopted by consensus.

34. Ms. DARMANIN (Malta) said that States now saw cause for concern not only in the threat of military incursion but also in the problems of illicit trade, terrorism and money laundering. The networks which spread threats of destabilization could be neutralized only by an equally effective network to overcome and combat such threats. The report "An Agenda for Peace" acknowledged the importance of regional organizations and the role which they played in the maintenance of international peace and security.

35. The Government of Malta attached great importance to cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations. The representative of Malta had proposed to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) that it should declare itself a regional arrangement within the meaning of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. The proposal had been endorsed by the heads of State and Government at the CSCE summit meeting in Helsinki and had generated the necessary impetus for increased cooperation between the United Nations and the CSCE.

36. Regional organizations were better able to deal with emerging security threats, which by their nature required flexibility of approach inspired by shared values. Any action taken at that level must obviously be consistent with the principles of the Charter.

37. The responsibility of the international community for the protection of the security of any State extended beyond external threats to some of the internal threats which arose within a society. The internal stability of States, large or small, depended on the rule of law, democracy, respect for human rights, and economic well-being.

38. The Maltese delegation supported the main thrust of the draft resolution; it shared the worries of many of the small States in the international community. That was why it had suggested a number of minor amendments which would make clearer the refusal to permit any neglect of legitimate concerns. It hoped that the clarification of its problems with the present text of the draft resolution would help to produce an agreed wording.

39. Mr. CHAUDHRY (Pakistan) said that his delegation firmly believed that, as provided for in the Charter, the United Nations clearly had the potential to guarantee the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Member States. Events around the globe had shown that small States were particularly vulnerable to the hegemonistic designs of big States, external threats and acts of interference in their internal affairs. It was therefore imperative for the international community to devise an appropriate mechanism to ensure their protection and guarantee their independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty. The problem of the security of small States was a multidimensional one encompassing the entire range of inter-State relations in military, economic and social matters and with regard to environmental security. The violation of international law on any pretext whatsoever was impermissible and unacceptable and contrary to the purposes and objectives of the United Nations.

40. The most appropriate mechanism for guaranteeing the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States was the Charter of the United Nations, which recognized the concept of collective security. Unilateral acts of intervention by a powerful State on the basis of its own interpretation of international law undermined the cause of peace and clashed with the spirit of the Charter. Regional arrangements had proved quite successful in many parts of the world. They must be based totally on the unqualified support of all the members of regional security agreements and must be consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

41. The delegation of Pakistan firmly supported a more active role for the Secretary-General in the consideration of matters connected with potential threats to international peace and security. He should fully utilize the powers entrusted to him under Article 99 of the Charter.

42. The sovereignty and independence of States could be secured only through collective action in accordance with the Charter. The Security Council must act as a deterrent to aggression, interference, hegemony and domination suffered by small States at the hands of large ones. Pakistan expressed the hope that the draft resolution would receive the support of the General Assembly and would be adopted by consensus.

43. Mr. BUALLAY (Bahrain) said that his delegation had welcomed the resolutions on the protection and security of small States adopted by the General Assembly. The cold war was over but the world still had many potential trouble spots. Given that situation, small States had a heightened feeling of insecurity, and there was a correspondingly greater need to ensure their defence, a need which was more real than sometimes imagined. It was sufficient to recall the recent aggression by Iraq against Kuwait, which had produced a great psychological shock because it meant that the unthinkable had happened. Furthermore, life in Kuwait had hardly returned to its normal pattern when the news arrived of a new deployment of Iraqi troops close to the border between the two States. Conflicts were also found in other regions.

44. In such circumstances small States needed international legal protection more than ever before. While in the past they had needed protection to augment

their level of well-being and development, some of them now needed it merely to maintain their existence.

45. Mr. KANE (Mauritania) said that since 1989, when the item on the protection and security of small States had been included in the agenda of the General Assembly at the initiative of Maldives, the matter had continued to be a central concern of the international community. Because of the profound changes that had occurred in recent years on the international scene, new and more complex problems, whose solution called for closer cooperation and solidarity, had been added to the traditional problems of mankind. In that connection Mauritania noted with satisfaction the consistency and effectiveness of the action taken by the Security Council. Small States regarded the United Nations, and particularly the Security Council, as the guarantors of their security. That was why they considered the equitable representation of small States in the various organs of the United Nations to be of the highest importance.

46. Referring to the concept of collective security, he said that because of the vulnerability of small States to external threats, those States occupied a special place on the international scene. That had been recognized by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his report to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session (A/46/339).

47. His delegation considered that since the most effective safeguard of the security of all States was respect for the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity and for the principles of the Charter and of international law, the United Nations could strengthen such security by increasing the effectiveness of the resources already at its disposal. In that connection, the Organization's preventive role might be enhanced by the systematic application of Article 99 of the Charter. Moreover, the United Nations was the appropriate forum for the development of agreed measures to enable States to address new problems more effectively, since it was acknowledged that military aggression or armed intervention were not the only factors that currently threatened the security of States.

48. His delegation noted that an important role in the common effort to achieve stability in the world devolved on subregional and regional organizations. Since confidence was one of the most important preconditions for security, it was important that the countries of each region should create machinery capable of enhancing transparency in their relations as a means of building confidence. In that connection, Mauritania welcomed the creation of the mechanism for conflict prevention and management under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

49. In addition to confidence-building, the economic and social development of all countries, particularly poor countries, should also be promoted, since such phenomena as poverty, illiteracy and disease were underlying factors in most conflicts.

50. Mr. SAMANA (Papua New Guinea), thanking the Secretary-General for his report on the protection and security of small States, said that the United

Nations should consider new proposals and strategies to ensure that the protection and security of small States was guaranteed. The question of the protection and security of small States, which constituted over 50 per cent of the membership of the United Nations, was extremely important for the survival of those entities. In that regard he commended the initiative taken by Maldives and expressed his appreciation of the resolution it had introduced on the protection and security of small States.

51. The delegation of Papua New Guinea considered that security in an interdependent world could not be handled in isolation, since, as the Secretary-General had pointed out in his Agenda for Peace, social peace was as important as strategic or political peace.

52. His delegation noted that the security of the countries of the Pacific region was threatened not so much by invasion by an aggressor or a foreign force as by other very serious social and economic factors, among them the depletion of natural resources, which could lead to social and political tensions and threaten the survival of their countries and their environment. Papua New Guinea therefore supported the resolution and strongly recommended: the development of South-South cooperation and regional capacity-building in trade and investment; strengthening the effectiveness of the agencies and machinery of the United Nations in their support for the development of small States; and the development of programmes and activities to strengthen the political and economic position of small States.

53. The CHAIRMAN announced that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Nigeria had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.3.

AGENDA ITEM 85: SCIENCE AND PEACE (continued)

54. Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica) said that at the forty-third session of the General Assembly in 1988, her delegation had proposed the inclusion of the item "Science and peace" on the Assembly's agenda. That item had next been considered at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly in 1990 when resolution 45/60 of 4 December 1990 had been adopted. It was to have been considered again at the forty-seventh session in compliance with that resolution but, because the necessary report was not available, Costa Rica had requested that consideration of it be deferred to the next session. At the next session the same thing had occurred, and Costa Rica had again requested the deferral of the item to the current, forty-ninth session. Again, however, the required report had not been submitted. Costa Rica greatly regretted what had occurred and proposed that the item be removed from the agenda of the General Assembly and, consequently, from that of the Fourth Committee.

55. Mr. DEYONG Kong (China) said that General Assembly resolution 43/61 of 6 December 1988 had made a great contribution to mankind's awareness of the importance of the questions of peace and security and of using scientific and technological achievements for the good of all people on earth. All mankind desired peace, but that goal had still not been attained. The end of the cold war had not brought genuine peace since new problems had arisen, the old ones

had not been resolved and conflicts had begun to break out one after the other. Peace and development were two fundamental problems of concern to mankind; if peace was the prerequisite, development was the ultimate objective. The Chinese people, who were known for their yearning for peace, had suffered greatly from foreign aggressors throughout their history, up to the time when full independence was attained. They were well aware that science and technology could play both a constructive and a destructive role in the development of civilization. In that context it was extremely important for the States Members of the United Nations to enable scientific and technological achievements to fulfil their proper role in ensuring peace and security, social development and economic growth.

56. Since 1988 China had observed every year the International Week of Science and Peace. The participants in the activities of the fifth International Week the previous year had included representatives of the Government, artists, scientists, students and other social groups. The next International Week of Science and Peace would be celebrated in China from 7 to 13 November. China was currently introducing long-term economic reforms designed to create the necessary internal and external conditions for economic progress. That was in the interests of the majority of countries, and China was ready to join those countries in furthering international cooperation in science and technology and promoting the utilization of scientific and technological achievements for economic development and social progress as its contribution to the strengthening of peace and security.

57. Mr. VERDIER (Argentina) expressed his appreciation to the delegation of Costa Rica for keeping the item on the agenda of the Committee and of the General Assembly over the years; he associated himself with the noble motives that had guided that delegation and proposed that the item be included on the agenda.

58. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that Costa Rica had proposed recommending to the General Assembly that it remove that item from its agenda and, consequently, from that of the Fourth Committee. He suggested that a decision on that matter be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

59. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

60. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco), supported by Mr. ZEGHIB (Algeria), pointed out that the draft resolutions on Western Sahara over the past five years had been adopted by the Fourth Committee by consensus and suggested that the Bureau should hold unofficial consultations on the draft in order to develop a consensus text for the current session also.

61. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee officers would note that proposal and would take an appropriate decision on it.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

*Official Records*

SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE (FOURTH COMMITTEE)
9th meeting
held on
Friday, 21 October 1994
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 9th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HUDYMA (Ukraine)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 148: THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF CROATIA

AGENDA ITEM 74: PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF SMALL STATES (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 85: SCIENCE AND PEACE (continued)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of the publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-794, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.4/49/SR.9
22 November 1994
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

94-81794 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 148: THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF CROATIA (A/49/12, A/49/319-S/1994/976, A/49/332-S/1994/986, A/49/346, A/49/383-S/1994/1052, A/49/393-S/1994/1062, A/49/447-S/1994/1108, A/49/473-S/1994/1129; A/C.4/49/8, A/C.4/49/9; A/C.4/49/L.4)

1. Mr. SACIRBEY (Bosnia and Herzegovina), introducing draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.4 on behalf of the sponsors, said that Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Malta, Senegal and Singapore had joined the sponsors. The draft resolution and the item to which it related dealt with issues of the highest importance to his delegation. Its adoption would make a major contribution to a just and lasting settlement of the crisis.

2. Speaking as the Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, he said that the conflict in Croatia and Bosnia had not been generated by an ethnic implosion, but, rather, by the Serbian desire to carve out an ethnically homogeneous greater Serbia, in whose name all the campaigns of aggression and ethnic cleansing had been carried out. In that connection the draft resolution was meant to reverse a systematic and frequently brutal campaign to dismember Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The occupation of those areas not under the de facto control of those two countries must be condemned.

3. If the forces of disintegration carried the day, not only would sovereignty and territorial integrity be sacrificed, so would human rights. The draft resolution was thus critical and well timed, not only for the victims of aggression in the former Yugoslavia, but also for the principles on which the United Nations Charter was based.

4. Mr. GRAF ZU RANTZAU (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union, Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden, said that the situation in the Serbian-controlled areas of Croatia was a permanent threat to the fragile state of non-belligerency which, with notable interruptions, had existed in the region since January 1992. The time had come to devise a political solution to the problems of the United Nations Protected Areas and the "pink zones".

5. The Serbian-Croat conflict in Croatia in reality involved two closely related problems. The first crucial issue was the problem of those areas of the Republic of Croatia under Serbian control, from which the non-Serbian population had been forcibly expelled. In that regard the European Union called for the authority of the Croatian Government to be restored, arrangements for autonomy to be agreed upon, and the expelled population, regardless of nationality, to be allowed to return. The future of the Serbian community in Croatia, especially in areas under the control of the Croatian Government, was the other, equally important problem. The European Union, concerned that in practice the Croatian constitutional law on the rights of national and ethnic communities, passed in December 1991, was not being fully implemented, reminded the Croatian Government that it must ensure strict respect for the fundamental civil and political

rights of all its citizens in accordance with established international standards.

6. The army of the former Yugoslavia had played a decisive role in the insurrection in Krajina and the establishment of Serbian control over mainly Croatian-populated areas. Furthermore the Belgrade Government continued to provide material and political support to the self-proclaimed authorities in those areas, and thus had a key role in bringing about a peaceful solution to the problem.

7. The 1992 Vance plan, endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 724 (1991), had outlined the framework for a lasting cessation of hostilities, the crucial element in which had been, and continued to be, UNPROFOR. However the Serbian side had never respected its main provisions, in particular, the demilitarization of the United Nations Protected Areas, the return of refugees and displaced persons and the establishment of a local police force. In addition the Serbs had retained control over the "pink zones", which the plan had not provided for. The only measure implemented had been the withdrawal of the regular units of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA), which had been completed by October 1992.

8. At the time the Vance plan had been adopted, certain basic principles for a political solution had already been established: CSCE and the European Union had warned that no territorial changes would be acceptable and the Conference on Yugoslavia, with the Carrington plan, had established the principle of a special status of territorial autonomy for certain areas of Croatia and similar areas in the former Yugoslavia.

9. For its part the European Union had worked consistently to find solutions to the conflict, in particular by sending the first monitoring mission in 1991 and by creating the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia. More recently, in November 1993, the European Union had proposed an action plan addressing all the problems of the region on the basis of a modus vivendi, the first part of which, a cease-fire agreement between the Croatian Government and the Krajina Serbs, had been implemented on 29 March 1994. The second part consisted in the adoption of various confidence-building measures, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 847 (1993) and 871 (1993). In that connection the European Union urged both parties, without further delay, to resume negotiations without preconditions.

10. The second part of the modus vivendi was only an intermediate step towards a definitive solution guaranteeing the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all the successor States to the former Yugoslavia, a solution to which the international community had committed itself in Security Council resolution 947 (1994). Further, the framework of that solution was already in existence: the Security Council had consistently and unequivocally affirmed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Croatia, including the United Nations Protected Areas and the "pink zones".

11. The principles embodied in the Carrington plan and the Vance plan had not lost their validity. The European Union called upon all parties to cooperate fully with the Co-Chairman of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia in the search for a political solution which would respect the rights of all the communities and would take account of the 1991 demographic structures of the United Nations Protected Areas and other areas where ethnic cleansing had subsequently occurred, wherever and by whomsoever committed. Regional autonomy would have to be limited to those areas of Croatia in which the pre-war census had indicated a Serbian majority. In other regions the time-frame and modalities of reintegration into Croatia would have to be carefully worked out.

12. A political solution would be heavily dependent on the attitude of Belgrade as well as on that of the self-proclaimed authorities in the Serbian-controlled areas. The Republic of Yugoslavia, which bore a major responsibility for the present situation, should contribute constructively to the peace process, inter alia, by recognizing Croatia within its internationally recognized borders and by making a commitment to support the efforts of the international community. Any peaceful solution for Bosnia and Herzegovina would remain precarious if it were not accompanied by a political settlement of the conflict over the Serbian-controlled areas of Croatia.

13. With respect to the draft resolution, the European Union continued to have reservations over the use of the words "occupation" and "occupied territories" in the third preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 2 respectively. Nevertheless the European Union would support its adoption.

14. Mr. NATHON (Hungary) observed that it had become commonplace to say that the crisis in the territory of the former Yugoslavia was the most serious in the history of Europe since the end of the Second World War. The international community had been unable to find a solution and the many resolutions adopted by the Security Council remained to be implemented.

15. It was against that background that the General Assembly had decided to include the question of the situation in the occupied territories of Croatia in its agenda. More than three years had elapsed since the adoption of the Vance plan, but the situation in the United Nations Protected Areas of Croatia had changed very little: no demilitarization had taken place in the Krajinas, the paramilitary forces had not been disbanded or disarmed and the refugees could not return to their homes. In that connection, the provision of shelter to the refugees who had been forced to flee as a result of the "ethnic cleansing" conducted by the self-proclaimed authorities in the United Nations Protected Areas inflicted a considerable burden on Hungary. The Krajina Serbs continued to ignore the positions taken by the international community.

16. There was no doubt that the so-called "Knin authorities" were relying on the support of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), whose aim was to integrate all Serbian-populated areas of the former Yugoslavia. Otherwise, there would be no need for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to emphasize the right of the Serbian people to self-determination or to accelerate

the integration of the occupied Croatian territories into its administrative, military, educational, transportation and communication systems.

17. It was his country's firm conviction that no reference to self-determination could justify or legitimize aggression, the conquest of territory and the changing of borders by force. The solution to the crisis lay rather in respect for human rights, including those of national minorities, i.e., those of the Krajina Serbs in Croatia. In that connection, the Yugoslav authorities, who said they had no territorial claims, should recognize Croatia and Bosnia within their existing internationally recognized borders without delay.

18. Hungary fully understood the legitimate concerns of the Croatian Government, which could not exercise its sovereignty over one third of its territory, despite the unequivocal position and support of the international community. The dangers of prolonging the status quo were obvious.

19. The draft resolution under consideration sent an unequivocal message, even though the past three years had shown that miracles could not be expected in the region. His delegation nevertheless considered it important for the General Assembly to make its position clear to the parties concerned.

20. The Political Declaration of the Heads of Government of the Central European Initiative, adopted at Trieste on 16 July 1994, had supported the Croatian proposal to include the question of the situation in the occupied territories in the agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. As a member of that framework of cooperation, Hungary was glad to be a sponsor of the draft resolution before the Committee.

21. Mr. BATU (Turkey) said that Turkey, as a close witness of the tragedy in the region under consideration, fully shared the concern of the Republic of Croatia and supported draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.4. The Washington and Vienna Agreements between the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Croatia had laid the groundwork for a viable peace process. The Agreements were intended to preserve the territorial integrity of those republics. The Serbs should immediately withdraw their forces from the occupied territories under the close and effective supervision of the international community. If a lasting peace was to be achieved, the consequences of "ethnic cleansing" and occupation must be reversed without further delay.

22. Turkey strongly condemned the ongoing de facto situation in the United Nations Protected Areas, which was jeopardizing the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Croatia. The entire international community must exert all possible pressure on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to recognize its neighbours within their internationally recognized borders. It was also necessary to establish an effective border monitoring system between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the neighbouring countries.

23. Turkey hoped that the draft resolution, of which it was a sponsor, would be adopted by consensus, so as to send a clear message to the aggressors.

24. Mr. SIMONOVIC (Croatia) thanked the General Assembly for having agreed to consider the situation in the occupied territories of Croatia. His delegation believed that the debate and the adoption of a resolution on the question would revive the deadlocked peace process in the region. Referring to the situation in Croatia and at Vukovar, which was as tragic as that in Bosnia and Herzegovina and at Sarajevo, he observed that the aim was not only to assist the populations concerned but also to defend the basic principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations.

25. Despite three years of diplomatic efforts aimed at finding a political solution to the conflict, the situation in Croatia had only become worse. UNPROFOR had not been able to assume control in the territories occupied by the self-proclaimed local authorities, which were supported by Belgrade and remnants of the Yugoslav army that had been transformed into local units. A great deal of evidence demonstrating the continued presence of the Yugoslav army in Croatia was available to the international community. In addition to its military occupation of parts of the United Nations Protected Areas and "pink zones", the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was seeking to bring them under the authority of its administration and integrate them into its economy: oil extraction, the banking sector and the university system provided examples of that process.

26. In fact, Croatia as a whole was feeling the effects of the occupation, for its main transportation and communication links had been cut. Beyond Croatia's borders, Europe itself, and more particularly Central Europe, were affected by the blockade of the Adriatic pipeline.

27. Lastly, and above all, Croatia was concerned about the fate of its 400,000 displaced persons and refugees, about 10 per cent of the population, whose anger and frustration arose not only from unacceptable living conditions but also from empty promises concerning their most basic right, the right to return and live in their own homes. The problem must be defined clearly if it was to be solved. In the case of Croatia, it was clear that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was occupying parts of the United Nations Protected Areas and the "pink zones" through its army and elements of its national minority, which were receiving its military and political support. That situation called for appropriate measures on the part of the international community, beginning with condemnation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its proxy authorities. In addition, it was necessary to promote a solution aimed not only at reintegrating territories but also at reintegrating all the people living together in Croatia. Mutual recognition between the successor States of the former Yugoslavia within their internationally recognized borders would be the essential next step in the peace process in Croatia. Croatia would welcome the General Assembly's clear vote of support in that regard.

28. However, it was not merely a question of defending national interests. No State Member of the United Nations could accept the changing of borders by force and abuse of the rights of defenceless civilians. A vote in favour of the draft

resolution would also be a vote of confidence in the principles of the Charter of the United Nations which, together with international law and standards, constituted the best defence against aggression and the best protection of sovereignty and territorial integrity, especially in the case of small States.

29. Mr. WHITMAN (United States of America) observed that draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.4 was a reminder that, while the conflict in Bosnia regularly commanded the world's attention, the equally tragic situation in Croatia was far from being settled. It rightly affirmed the position of the General Assembly and the Security Council that any settlement must be consistent with the territorial integrity of the Republic of Croatia.

30. The conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia were closely related in their consequences. Both had arisen from the exploitation of nationalist ambitions and fears by those who argued that ethnic security could only be assured by violence, the seizure of territory and reprehensible acts of "ethnic cleansing". Both conflicts had caused enormous suffering among the civilian population, and the failure to resolve those conflicts could be attributed primarily to the refusal of one party - the Serb party - to acknowledge that its interests were better served by negotiation and reconciliation than by continued hostilities and stalemate.

31. His Government intended to redouble its efforts to contribute to peace in Croatia and would do its utmost to encourage the parties to bury their resentments, hatreds and fears. It would do its part, but the responsibility for negotiation, compromise and forward-looking decisions rested with the parties themselves.

32. Mr. KHANDOGY (Ukraine) said that, for Ukraine, the fratricidal conflicts between the sovereign States of the former Yugoslavia were all the more disquieting given their proximity to its borders, the traditionally close economic, trade and cultural relations linking it to Croatia, Serbia, and other countries of the region and the subjection of Ukrainians living in the former Yugoslavia to the disgraceful practice of "ethnic cleansing". One of Ukraine's battalions, as part of the UNPROFOR contingent, was deployed in Sector North in Croatia, where a number of Ukrainian soldiers had lost their lives.

33. His delegation condemned the shameful and illegal practice of "ethnic cleansing", regardless of the identity of the perpetrators. It urged that those odious practices should cease immediately.

34. It reiterated its support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Croatia and called for the recognition of Croatia within its current, internationally recognized borders. The Serbian-controlled territories of Croatia must be peacefully reintegrated into the rest of the country under the close supervision of the international community.

35. The unconstitutional activities of the so-called Knin government were unacceptable. The proclamation of the "Serbian Krajina" in the territory of Croatia contravened the provisions of Security Council resolutions that regarded

United Nations Protected Areas as constituting an integral part of the Republic of Croatia, whose sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected.

36. Slow progress in the implementation of the confidence-building measures between the Government of Croatia and the Croatian Serbs had adversely affected the civilian population, resulting in a flood of refugees and displaced persons.

37. He reiterated his delegation's support for United Nations activities aimed at achieving a peaceful settlement of the conflicts in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. In particular, his delegation welcomed the progress that had been made in implementing the agreement between UNPROFOR and the Government of Croatia on procedures regulating UNPROFOR traffic in the United Nations Protected Areas, and it called on the Croatian authority to continue to implement the provisions faithfully. It also urged all parties to the conflict to stop the bloodshed and to continue to seek an overall negotiated settlement of the conflict, again emphasizing that a military option would have incalculable consequences and would not lead to a durable peace.

38. Despite some imbalances and despite certain legal inaccuracies, especially in the use of the words "occupation" and "occupied territories", draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.4 appeared designed to facilitate the peaceful settlement of the Croatian crisis. His delegation therefore supported the thrust of the draft, especially paragraph 7, in which the General Assembly urged the restoration of the authority of the Republic of Croatia in its entire territory and further urged the utmost respect for human and minority rights in the territory of Croatia, including the right to autonomy in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and established international standards. It also welcomed the appeal in the same paragraph for efforts to achieve a political solution within the framework of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, and it endorsed without qualification paragraph 9.

39. It was to be hoped that, by dint of additional efforts by the international community and through compromise, the conflict could be speedily settled with due regard for the interests of all the parties concerned.

40. Mr. DOUDECH (Tunisia) said that the Serbian occupation of the former Yugoslavia and parts of Croatia was a flagrant violation of one of the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations, namely the principle of inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory through the use of force.

41. The breach was made more serious by the accompanying huge-scale "ethnic cleansing" and displacements, which were a gross violation of the most elementary principles of humanitarian law.

42. Although a plan to restore peace in Croatia had been drawn up and the Security Council had adopted a series of resolutions requesting all the parties to cooperate fully in order to implement the plan, the Serbian party continued to defy the international community by seeking to impose, in occupied Croatia, a military force and a political authority answering to the Belgrade Government,

which continued to arm and support the paramilitary forces of Serbs in Croatia in the attempt to create greater Serbia.

43. Such expansionist designs were evident from the participation of Serbian forces stationed in Croatia in military activities against Bosnia and Herzegovina and from the measures taken by the Serbian occupation authorities to establish an administrative, legal and monetary union linking the occupied Croatian territories, the Serbian-occupied territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

44. His delegation therefore reiterated it commitment to the principle of respect for the territorial integrity of States and condemned the Serbian occupation of parts of Croatian territory. It stood ready to support efforts to restore peace and stability in the Balkans.

45. For his delegation, the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, the launching of the peace-keeping plan in Croatia, the demobilization of all the units and all the elements making up the military forces operating in the United Nations Protected Areas, the return of the refugees and displaced persons and the recognition by the authorities of Serbia and Montenegro of the internationally recognized borders of Croatia were prerequisites for the normalization of the situation in the occupied territories of Croatia.

46. Thus far, the Croatian authorities had manifested a genuine will to cooperate with the United Nations by giving precedence to dialogue and negotiation and by adopting constitutional legislation recognizing the rights of minorities and therefore providing safeguards for all the communities living in Croatia. His delegation therefore considered that it was for the Serbian party to comply with the international legal regime and to display a spirit of cooperation. It urged the international community to put pressure on the Serbs and to redouble efforts to reach a peaceful solution.

47. His delegation welcomed the signature, on 29 March 1994, of the agreement calling for a cease-fire agreement in Croatia, urged that that agreement should be followed by practical measures enabling progress to be made in politically joining the occupied territories to the legal system of Croatia and expressed support for the draft resolution under consideration.

48. Mr. SHARIFF OMAR (Malaysia) said that the situation in the occupied territories of Croatia deserved the international community's full attention. He therefore welcomed the inclusion of that item in the agenda of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. Although it welcomed the positive efforts made by the Government of Croatia to adhere to the Security Council decisions and resolutions relating to the situation in the occupied territories of Croatia, the Malaysian delegation was gravely concerned by the failure so far of the Serbs to comply with those decisions and resolutions. That was a major stumbling block in the search for a just and durable solution to the conflict.

49. The Malaysian delegation was also deeply disappointed by the lack of commitment on the part of the Security Council to enforce the resolutions which it had adopted to bring a just end to the conflict, despite Malaysia's repeated calls on the Council to do so. Indeed, the action of the Council in other parts of the world indicated that the Council's inability to put an end to the crisis in Croatia was due not to a lack of capability or resources, but rather to a lack of interest and political will.

50. The Security Council's reluctance and inability to enforce its own decisions were attributable to, inter alia, the deep divisions motivated by parochial interests among the major Powers. Those Powers, while occupying the high moral ground on human rights and democracy, seemed unmoved by the massive human rights violations and human misery in Croatia and apparently ignored the fact that the failure of the Security Council to enforce its own resolutions only served to undermine its own legitimacy.

51. It was therefore no wonder that the Serbs, whose crimes remained unpunished, continued to openly flout the resolutions of the Security Council. Indeed, Security Council resolution 943 (1994) of 23 September 1994, which provided for a partial lifting of sanctions, had served only to embolden the aggressors and their supporters, who had seen the adoption of that resolution as a sign that the Security Council would continue to succumb to the pressure which they exercised through their policy of "ethnic cleansing" and acquisition of territory through the use of force.

52. Malaysia, as a peace-loving nation, could not condone any act of aggression against a sovereign State. His delegation had consistently spoken out against the despicable policies of "ethnic cleansing" and genocide. Serbian aggression in the occupied territories of the Republic of Croatia represented a flagrant violation of the principles of the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in the affairs of other States, which were enshrined in the Charter and in international humanitarian law, and threatened the territorial integrity and security of the Republic of Croatia.

53. Malaysia therefore urged the Serbs to withdraw immediately from the occupied territories of Croatia in accordance with Security Council resolution 820 (1993). It fervently hoped that peace could be restored in the Republic of Croatia and in the region as a whole, including in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

54. Lastly, his delegation urged the Committee to adopt the draft resolution under consideration, which it was co-sponsoring.

55. Mr. LENARČIČ (Slovenia) said that the debate on the item under consideration brought to mind the situation that had existed three years previously, when the expectation of imminent bloodshed had been tempered by hopes that the international community would prevent such a catastrophe. At that time, the former Yugoslavia had been in the process of dissolution and had eventually ceased to exist.

56. That situation in itself had not necessarily been a tragedy, since other socialist federations in Europe had also dissolved and ceased to exist. That dissolution, however, had been accomplished without the use of force, unlike the situation in the Republic of Croatia, a country which had since 1991 been the victim of armed aggression by the army of the former Yugoslavia. The fact of that aggression had been reflected in the Vance Plan which, as one of its fundamental elements, had demanded the complete withdrawal of the army of the former Yugoslavia. A peace-keeping operation had later been established and one of its tasks had been the creation of the necessary conditions for the return of refugees and displaced persons. Unfortunately, those efforts had been unsuccessful. Many members of the former Yugoslav army had not been withdrawn and had become members of local Serb paramilitary units. The violence had continued, resembling more and more the pattern of "ethnic cleansing" while the threat to the territorial integrity of Croatia had intensified. In that connection, the Slovenian delegation wished to emphasize that the borders of the successor States of the former Yugoslavia were well known and internationally recognized. They were the historical borders which, during the existence of the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, had been constitutionally approved. Allegations to the effect that they were merely administrative borders were therefore totally unfounded.

57. In that connection, the General Assembly should attach the importance it deserved to the situation in the occupied territories of Croatia and should make recommendations for action to complement the efforts of the Security Council, the Contact Group on Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Co-chairmen of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia. Particular emphasis should be placed on the need to preserve the territorial integrity of Croatia, to create suitable conditions for the return of displaced persons, and to restore the authority of the Republic of Croatia in Serbian-controlled territories. The latter action should be complemented by measures to ensure respect for human and minority rights, in accordance with established international standards.

58. Mr. KOVANDA (Czech Republic) said that the draft resolution under consideration focused attention on one of the most important problems of the former Yugoslavia, namely, the current status of Croatian territories with a Serbian majority which had been under the de facto administration of self-proclaimed authorities belonging to that same majority. Most of those territories were in the United Nations protected areas in which peace was being preserved thanks to the presence of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). Unfortunately, that situation was illustrative of a pattern seen in other parts of the former Yugoslavia, and indeed in other areas of the world. Self-proclaimed regional authorities assumed power, "ethnically cleansed" the territories under their control and acquired a specious mandate from the population that remained. Meanwhile, the international community, which had been fully aware of the fighting under way and of the plight of "ethnically cleansed" and displaced persons, sent in a peace-keeping operation which, while helping to reduce the intensity of the fighting, was nevertheless unable to restore the status quo ante. The Czech delegation had decided to co-sponsor the draft resolution under consideration because it fully understood the gravity of

the situation and the frustrations and impatience of the Government and population of the Republic of Croatia, even though it was of the view that the wording of the text could have been somewhat improved.

59. The Czech delegation strongly urged the parties to continue to observe the cease-fire agreed to in March 1994, which was of crucial importance. Moreover, it regretted that the talks initiated between the Governments of Zagreb and Belgrade and between the Government of Zagreb and the breakaway authorities in Knin had so far yielded no results and it urged the parties concerned to resume those discussions with a view to bringing about an early reopening of communication and transport links, including the Adriatic pipeline.

60. The Czech delegation was of the view, however, that the key to the problem lay in the relations between Zagreb and Belgrade and that mutual recognition of the States in the region, within their internationally recognized borders, was an important step towards untangling the situation. It therefore strongly recommended that such a step should be taken, since it would also greatly simplify parallel or consecutive discussions between the Croatian authorities and the representatives of Croatian Serbs. In that context, while it welcomed the changes that had been made in Croatia's Constitution in order to provide autonomy for Croatia's Serbs, his delegation regretted that the Croatian authorities had not so far fully clarified their reaction to the proposals made by the peace negotiators concerning the extent of such autonomy.

61. The Czech delegation agreed that it was hardly feasible for Croatia to unilaterally decide to reintegrate the United Nations protected areas and that, unless the parties agreed on that issue, the only way to reintegrate those areas would be by force, a solution in which UNPROFOR would obviously be disinclined to engage.

62. The Czech delegation noted with satisfaction that the draft resolution under consideration commended the work of UNPROFOR and recognized the importance of its role in the overall peace process. His country was proud to have 900 troops serving under UNPROFOR in Croatia, where they had earned the respect of all. The role of UNPROFOR was vital and the Czech Republic therefore unreservedly supported Security Council resolution 947 (1994), which extended the mandate of that force for an additional period of six months. His delegation hoped that, in accordance with that resolution, the Croatian authorities would proceed rapidly to complete negotiations on agreements on the status of forces.

63. In summary, the Czech Republic was ready to contribute to the revival of a peace economy in Croatia, whenever invited.

64. Mr. TAKHT-RAVANCHI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said the tragic events of the previous three years in Croatia had made it clear that despite many Security Council resolutions and statements, peace in the entire territory of the Republic of Croatia had not been restored. The same was true in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where ethnic cleansing, genocide and violations of the most fundamental human rights and international humanitarian law were being

committed by the Serbs. The continuance of that situation was due to the lack of political will to address the root causes of the problems, namely Serbian aggression.

65. The war in the Republic of Croatia had started in June 1991, and major military operations had been halted by a cease-fire agreed upon in January 1992. The Security Council had reaffirmed, by its resolutions 815 (1993), 820 (1993) and 847 (1993), the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Croatia within its internationally recognized borders. Serbian occupying forces had, however, pursued their campaign of ethnic cleansing and altered the demographic structure of the occupied parts of Croatia, and attempted to integrate the occupied territories into the administrative, military, educational, transportation and communication systems of Serbia and Montenegro.

66. In its declaration of 29 September 1994, the Ministerial Meeting of the Contact Group of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on Bosnia and Herzegovina had called for the recognition by Serbia and Montenegro of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the Republic of Croatia and other States of the former Yugoslavia within their internationally recognized borders. His Government, as a member of the Contact Group of OIC, considered that recognition to be one of the most important elements to be materialized in order to arrive at a peaceful solution to the crisis.

67. His delegation had therefore joined the sponsors of the draft resolution which was before the Committee, in the hope that its adoption would help reverse the results of the aggression in the region and ensure respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States of the former Yugoslavia.

68. Mr. KEATING (New Zealand) said it was timely that the General Assembly should consider the implications of the situation currently existing in the territory of the Republic of Croatia. It was three years since the United Nations, through the Vance Plan, had established protected areas in Croatia, and it was clear that only a comprehensive settlement could achieve their reintegration into Croatian jurisdiction.

69. His Government believed that one of the foundations of such a settlement had to be mutual recognition of the international borders, and respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all States in the region.

70. It was appropriate that draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.4 should call for respect for the cease-fire agreements and for the resumption of direct negotiations in close cooperation with the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, so that the international community and the parties concerned could work on finding a solution on the basis of the other fundamental elements of the peace process set out in the draft resolution.

71. Essentially, the draft resolution affirmed the right of Croatia, as of every other Member of the United Nations, to live in peace within its internationally recognized borders. It was understandable that it also

reflected the frustration of the Government of Croatia at the slow progress towards resolving the situation in the Serb-held parts of the country.

72. His delegation supported the draft resolution, which complemented decisions taken in the Security Council and reaffirmed the principle that it was unacceptable to seize territory by force.

73. Mr. BAHADUR KHAN (Pakistan) said the principles of inviolability of international borders, preservation of sovereignty and territorial integrity, and inadmissibility of acquisition of territory by use of force had been violated with impunity by the Serb aggressors. The international community bore a collective responsibility for the situation and for the failure to halt and reverse Serbian aggression and restore the occupied territories to Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

74. Peace should be restored in the region without further delay, by applying the various measures set out in draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.4.

75. Pakistan had welcomed the Washington Agreement and the establishment of the Federation of Croats and Bosnians as a positive step towards restoring peace and stability in the region. Hopes had also been engendered by the peace plan presented by the European Contact Group for territorial allocation to the Bosnians and Croats. Regrettably the Bosnian Serbs had rejected the plan despite the fact that it was unjust to the Bosnian Muslims. If peace was to endure it should be just. Aggression could not be condoned; it would be wrong to reward the aggressor and penalize the victim.

76. Pakistan had voted against the partial lifting of sanctions on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) because the consequences of aggression had not been reversed and territories occupied by force had not been restored. Lifting of the arms embargo might only serve to encourage Serbian intransigence. Before such a step was taken, measures should be adopted to relieve the suffering in Sarajevo and other areas. The Security Council should at least have responded forcefully to the gross violations of its resolutions. The entire area allocated to the Bosnian-Croat Federation should have been declared a "safe area". Pakistan fully supported the proposal for the immediate lifting of the arms embargo against Bosnia and Herzegovina, to allow the inhabitants to defend themselves.

77. The Foreign Minister of Pakistan, in his capacity as Chairman of the Contact Group of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on Bosnia and Herzegovina at the level of Foreign Ministers, had conveyed to the President of the Security Council the dismay of the Islamic States at the adoption by the Council of resolution 943 (1994), partially easing the sanctions, and had reaffirmed that the OIC countries contributing troops to the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) were willing to contribute additional troops to strengthen the Force.

78. Pakistan welcomed the recent extension of the mandate of UNPROFOR. In the absence of an overall political settlement acceptable to all parties, the

Force's presence remained invaluable. However, vigorous steps should be taken by the Force to effectively protect the safe areas, and exclusion zones should be created around them.

79. His delegation had co-sponsored the draft resolution before the Committee, in the hope that its adoption would help the international community to respond effectively to the atrocities committed by Serbia in the occupied territories, and to restore without delay Croatia's authority over its entire territory.

80. Mr. FUKUSHIMA (Japan) said the cease-fire agreement signed in Zagreb on 29 March 1994 by the Government of Croatia and the local Serb authorities in the United Nations Protected Areas had proved effective in significantly reducing hostilities in Croatia. That was due in no small part to the contribution of UNPROFOR, for which Japan expressed its heartfelt appreciation.

81. With the conclusion of the agreement, expectations have been raised regarding the normalization of relations, particularly economic relations, between the Croatian authorities and the local Serb authorities in the Protected Areas. However, the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, despite its continued efforts, had not obtained a resumption of negotiations for that purpose. Japan considered the resumption of negotiations between the parties concerned to be absolutely essential to the normalization of the situation in Croatia.

82. Japan was deeply concerned about the lack of progress and the danger that the international community might become resigned to the status quo.

83. Regarding draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.4, his delegation had reservations as to the appropriateness of some of the paragraphs, particularly paragraph 2, but supported the general thrust of the text. It recognized the importance of continuing efforts to restore peace throughout the territory of the Republic of Croatia while preserving its territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders; the importance of the mutual recognition by all States in the region of the former Yugoslavia of their international borders; and the right of all refugees and displaced persons from that region to return to their homes in safety and in dignity.

84. In September 1994, the Security Council had adopted a resolution extending the mandate of UNPROFOR for six months. It was incumbent upon the international community to redouble its efforts without delay, in order to restore peace throughout the region through a process of negotiation. Japan supported all international efforts, particularly those of UNPROFOR, the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, and the Contact Group.

85. The CHAIRMAN invited delegations wishing to do so to explain their vote before the vote on draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.4.

86. Mr. FEDOTOV (Russian Federation) said that a just and lasting settlement of the complex set of problems related to the situation in the United Nations Protected Areas in Croatia was important for settlement of the crisis in the

former Yugoslavia, without which there could be no peace or stability in the Balkans. Having actively supported the efforts made in that direction by the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, Russia regretted that the United Nations Vance Plan had still not been implemented. It noted that the Security Council resolutions contained a whole series of concrete measures aimed at resolving the situation in the areas concerned.

87. In reading the draft resolution on the question, his delegation could not help but note the extent to which it deviated from the provisions of the Security Council resolutions. It was extremely biased and failed to convey all elements of the situation. In particular, it omitted to mention that the future status of the territories concerned should be determined through negotiations. His delegation had therefore proposed amendments with a view to restoring balance in the text and bringing the wording into line with that of the Security Council resolutions. Unfortunately, those amendments had not been taken into consideration.

88. Under such circumstances, his delegation could not support the draft and would abstain from participating in the vote. It hoped, however, that the General Assembly's adoption of a unilateral resolution would not hamper the negotiation process at the very time when it was being accelerated. The Russian Federation believed that the relevant Security Council resolutions and the provisions of the Vance Plan formed the desired basis for continuation of the search for a solution to the complex problem of the United Nations Protected Areas.

89. Mr. KULLA (Albania) stated that Albania, which had always condemned Serbian aggression, was extremely concerned by the ethnic cleansing being carried out by the Federal Army of Yugoslavia in the context of the war of aggression that it was waging against Croatia. It therefore supported the efforts of the international community aimed at finding a political solution to the crisis. Accordingly, Albania would vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.4, which sent a clear message to the Serbs.

90. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.4.

91. At the request of one representative, a recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives,

Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Angola, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, India, Lesotho, Mexico, Namibia, Paraguay, Russian Federation, South Africa, Togo, Venezuela, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

92. Draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.4 was adopted by 111 votes to none, with 20 abstentions.

93. Mr. DUMITRIU (Romania), explaining his vote, said that Romania, speaking in explanation of vote, said that Romania supported all peaceful initiatives aimed at restoring peace in the Balkans. In particular, it supported the appeal made in paragraph 10 of the draft resolution to resume direct negotiations in close cooperation with the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia. In addition, Romania was pleased that an appeal had been made for mutual recognition between the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) within their existing internationally recognized borders.

94. Mr. PATRIOTA (Brazil) remarked that political and religious tolerance was the cornerstone of relations in Brazilian society. Since it wished to see an easing of tensions in the Balkans, Brazil supported the draft resolution, which reaffirmed the right of all refugees and displaced persons from the former Yugoslavia to return voluntarily to their homes.

95. He none the less had a reservation concerning the wording of paragraph 2, which was inconsistent with the resolutions adopted on the subject by the Security Council.

96. Mr. ZHANG (China) said China believed that all parties to the conflict should seek a negotiated, just and lasting solution. It was important to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries in the region, and to protect all ethnic groups. With regard to the United Nations Protected Areas, it was to be hoped that the parties to the conflict would succeed in finding an appropriate solution in the framework of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia. Since it subscribed to the peace efforts aimed at reaching a lasting settlement in the region, China supported the

substance of the draft resolution that had just been adopted. Its support of the resolutions adopted by the Security Council on the subject was motivated by the same reasons. Furthermore, China believed that the territory of Croatia should be protected. The wording of the provisions on the "occupied territories" did not correspond to that of the relevant Security Council resolutions, which could lead to legal and even political difficulties. China had therefore abstained from the vote.

97. Mr. CAMACHO OMISTE (Bolivia) stressed that his country's abstention by no means altered its intangible support for the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by force.

98. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had thus completed consideration of agenda item 148.

AGENDA ITEM 74: PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF SMALL STATES (A/C.4/49/L.3)

99. The CHAIRMAN announced that Benin, Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Oman, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.3 on the protection and security of small States.

100. Draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.3 was adopted without a vote.

AGENDA ITEM 85: SCIENCE AND PEACE (continued)

101. The CHAIRMAN suggested to the Committee that, as the representative of Costa Rica had proposed at the 8th meeting, held on 19 October 1994, the item entitled "Science and peace" should be removed from the agenda.

102. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

103. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee would take up agenda item 80 (Questions relating to information) on 26 October 1994.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

*Official Records*

SPECIAL POLITICAL AND
DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE
(FOURTH COMMITTEE)
10th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 26 October 1994
at 10 a.m.
New York

# SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 10th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HUDYMA (Ukraine)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 80: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of the publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-794, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.4/49/SR.10
21 November 1994
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

94-81818 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 80: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (A/49/21, A/49/385, A/49/472)

1. Mr. HOLOHAN (Ireland) (Rapporteur of the Committee on Information), introducing the Report of the Committee on Information (A/49/21), said that the Committee on Information had once again decided by consensus to recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of two draft resolutions entitled "Information in service of humanity" and "United Nations public information policies and activities". Draft resolution A dealt with questions of cooperation in the sphere of information, and draft resolution B dealt with the work of the Department of Public Information (DPI) over the following year in a number of key areas.

2. Chief among the mandates which would be entrusted to DPI under draft resolution B would be the continued dissemination of information about United Nations activities aimed at promoting an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations system. Following the establishment of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa, United Nations information efforts in support of the eradication of apartheid should be discontinued.

3. The Bureau of the Committee on Information was happy to note the growing interest in its work, as evidenced in new requests for admission to membership. The draft decision entitled "Increase in the membership of the Committee on Information" would have the General Assembly decide to appoint Belize, Croatia, the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan as members of the Committee. On the basis of consultations undertaken within the Extended Bureau of the Committee on Information, his delegation proposed an amendment to the draft decision contained in paragraph 62 of document A/49/21 which would add South Africa to the list of States appointed to membership of the Committee.

4. The work of the Committee on Information and its cooperation with DPI had been characterized by an atmosphere of mutual understanding and friendship, and he was confident that the Special Political and Decolonization Committee would once again endorse the consensus in support of the draft resolutions.

5. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should consider the amendment submitted by the representative of Ireland to the draft decision contained in paragraph 62 of document A/49/21 when the Committee took action on all the proposals which it was asked to consider under agenda item 80.

6. It was so decided.

7. Mr. SANBAR (Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information) said that the report of the Secretary-General on questions relating to information (A/49/385) gave an overview of the work of DPI in implementation of General Assembly resolution 48/44 B of 10 December 1993. Although DPI was officially responsible for disseminating information about the United Nations, in an

intensely competitive communications environment every opportunity had to be seized to advance knowledge about the work and potential of the United Nations, and all members of the United Nations community should participate in that activity.

8. As the Secretary-General had stated on several occasions, the world had entered a new stage in its history. Problems were becoming increasingly global and required multilateral solutions. The United Nations had therefore become a global forum, in a way it had never been before, for dealing with a wide array of such problems; it therefore needed more support than ever before. In pursuit of the concept of mutual interest, DPI had expanded its circle of partnerships, exploring joint ventures with the media, intensifying dialogue with academic communities and forging stronger links with a growing number of non-governmental organizations.

9. DPI had helped to draw up practical public information strategies for the series of international conferences that were laying out development strategies for the coming years. For example, DPI had cooperated closely with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in developing the information component for the recent International Conference on Population and Development, and was currently working to provide similar practical information support to conference secretariats by actively participating in the steering committees for the forthcoming World Summit for Social Development and Fourth World Conference on Women.

10. DPI was developing the closest relationships with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the United Nations University (UNU) and the regional economic commissions. The purpose of that cooperation was to ensure the maximum possible impact with existing resources. The same applied to the relationship between DPI and other Secretariat departments. The Department's cooperation with UNESCO, the aim of which was to promote the emergence of an independent and pluralistic press, had, with the assistance of international professional media organizations and the material support of Governments, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations, enabled the Department to hold seminars in Africa, Asia, South America, and the Caribbean. A similar seminar would be organized by DPI and UNESCO for Arab countries in 1995.

11. In a competitive modern media, speed was the essence of effective communication. During the current year, DPI had entered the so-called information superhighway and was posting material that could be accessed by nearly 30 million users with the potential for millions more. In addition, DPI materials could be accessed on seven other electronic networks, both public and commercial. DPI was also pursuing the development of comprehensive on-line services available to the public, media and delegations.

12. Since international public support was a necessary prerequisite for peace-keeping and humanitarian missions, the number of which was increasing, an effective information and communication component was essential to their success. It was particularly important to target countries that were contributing troops and other resources, and to ensure that the population in countries where peace-keeping missions were deployed fully understood those missions. It was therefore essential that a DPI representative should be included in the survey team dispatched at the conceptual stage, and that a comprehensive information strategy should be viewed as a critical element in ensuring a successful operation.

13. The Department of Public Information viewed radio as one of the most effective media for delivering the message of peace-keeping in the host countries. The Fourth Committee and the Committee on Information at its sixteenth session had called for a strengthening of the role of public information in peace-keeping missions. The Department of Public Information supported a new strategy that would enable it to play a more effective role not only in peace-keeping but also in all other aspects of the Organization's work. The new strategy should be based on a partnership between the Department of Public Information and other Secretariat departments concerned with peace-keeping, political and humanitarian affairs and economic and social development, and should also acknowledge that the Department of Public Information was the focal point and coordinating mechanism for public information activities in the Secretariat.

14. As international media coverage of the United Nations focused almost exclusively on peace-keeping, a significant proportion of the general public had come to believe that development was not a priority United Nations activity. The Department would have considerable difficulty in correcting that perception and persuading the world media that economic and social issues were no less deserving of attention than matters of peace and security. In the current biennium, the Department was using substantial resources to shed light on the role of the United Nations in development and to that end had mobilized to prepare for the cycle of international conferences. The issues to be addressed by the conferences were being publicized in "Development Update", a publication launched in 1994.

15. The Department had completed work on a book to be published in December 1994 on United Nations efforts to counter apartheid from 1948. The Secretary-General had written an extensive introduction and had presented an advance copy to President Nelson Mandela, who had highly commended the new book at a press conference. It was one of a new range of Department publications entitled "United Nations Blue Books Series". Each publication in the series would bring together all the key documents pertaining to a particular United Nations operation in the political, developmental or humanitarian area.

16. The Department of Public Information was making every effort to enhance its professional credibility and the effectiveness of its work. To that end, its staff would have to be fully utilized and mobilized so that they became an integral part of the process. In addition, flexibility would be required from

the offices dealing with finance and personnel, since all units of the Department had to respond immediately to information demands.

17. In the current year, the Department of Public Information had intensified its efforts to develop information products in the Organization's two working languages, English and French. A large volume of material was also prepared in the other official languages with the assistance of the United Nations information centres. In addition, the Department circulated material on various United Nations activities to local and regional target populations, using the widest possible range of languages. The Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace", for example, had been published in 32 languages at very low cost.

18. Effective communication was needed on such issues as development, peace-keeping, democracy, human rights and humanitarian assistance. Interdepartmental and inter-agency consultations were of great importance for the formulation of the Department's information strategies relating to the cycle of United Nations conferences.

19. Progress was also being made in efforts to improve the guided tours operation at Headquarters, which was a unique and effective means of promoting an informed understanding of the work of the United Nations. With the cooperation of the Department of Administration and Management, it was hoped to gain access to the Security Council and Trusteeship Council chambers and to update the exhibits.

20. Operational guidance to United Nations information centres and services was more important than ever before. Over the previous five years, the Department had made great efforts to improve the technological facilities available to the information centres. Only a few of the centres had had computers and printers in 1990. Currently, all information centres had at least one computer system so that it was possible to keep in touch by means of electronic mail and the Internet for fast, cost-effective and convenient transfer of information.

21. The information products of the Department of Public Information included radio programmes disseminated in 15 languages to over 1,800 radio broadcasters throughout the world. Publications were one of the Department's most valuable assets. It was undertaking a review of its publications to make them more current, interesting and substantive and to reflect through them the diversity and vitality of United Nations involvement in every facet of international life. After lagging behind schedule for many years, the Yearbook of the United Nations had been published on time since 1992. With the integration of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, the Department had been able to utilize the Library's rich information resources and expand the services provided to the Secretariat, permanent missions, depository libraries, government agencies and other users world wide.

22. Mr. KRAUSE (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union, expressed confidence that the Committee would be in a position to endorse fully the results of the sixteenth session of the Committee on Information, held from 9 to

24 May 1994. Freedom of the press and the unhindered flow of information were fundamental prerequisites for achieving the ideals to which the international community aspired, namely the full development of the potential of every human being and democracy and progress in all fields. The European Union fully supported the Declaration of Santiago on Media Development and Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean held by the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Development Programme in Santiago, Chile, from 2 to 6 May 1994. It condemned in the strongest terms any attack against members of the press and paid tribute to those journalists who had died in the performance of their duty.

23. The European Union welcomed the intensive efforts of the Assistant Secretary-General to use the Department of Public Information to further consolidate a unified and credible public image of the United Nations. In that connection, he stressed the significant role of the Committee on Information and drew attention to operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution B contained in document A/49/21.

24. The European Union firmly supported the Secretary-General's policy of integrating United Nations information centres into other United Nations offices whenever feasible. The importance and standing of individual centres depended on the quality and efficiency of their work, especially in view of the increasing interest being shown by Member States in the information activities of the United Nations.

25. The dissemination of information about United Nations peace-keeping operations was of paramount importance to the international community. That applied in particular to countries where peace-keeping operations were being conducted and to troop-contributing countries. It was there that the success and credibility of peace-keeping operations as a whole were decided, since the success of such operations largely depended on the understanding and support of the local population in those countries.

26. Active public relations work must also cover those sectors of the United Nations dealing with social and development issues. The European Union supported the efforts by the Department of Public Information (DPI) to ensure efficient information coverage of the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in March 1995 and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995.

27. The question of promoting world-wide awareness of the United Nations was also linked to the issue of access to the United Nations Secretariat building in New York. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's response to the ideas voiced by the Committee on Information concerning the guided tour arrangements in the Secretariat building. Changes to those arrangements had once again made possible visits to the Security Council Chamber, an important step in satisfying the interest which people from many different countries took in the activities of the United Nations. In conclusion, he noted that, thanks to positive developments in South Africa, DPI was able to redirect its personnel and financial resources to other, more relevant goals.

28. Mr. ZEGHIB (Algeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that the post-cold war era was marked by a number of contradictions. On the one hand, there was a resurgence of conflicts and violence yet, on the other, a number of conflicts were being resolved and there were growing signs of a new age of revitalized international cooperation. A critical stage had been reached, at which the United Nations had the opportunity to bring together its two main areas of activity: security and development.

29. The role of public information in the pursuit of global peace could not be overstated, and it was crucial that the United Nations should be able to give the international community an accurate and objective account of its achievements and problems. Adequate attention must be given to the transfer of information and communication technologies, including to the benefit of the United Nations system, taking into account existing frameworks and avoiding duplication. That area could usefully be set aside for detailed consideration in the General Assembly after Governments had submitted their views to the Secretary-General. He fully supported the freedom of information and expression, and considered that a press free of all undue restrictions played a fundamental role in strengthening democracy and the peaceful coexistence of States. At the same time, he stressed the need for adequate measures to address the imbalances, particularly in the fields of technology and training, which hampered efforts by the developing countries to build their own capacities to provide information and to comment on national, regional and world events.

30. DPI had a number of important tasks before it in the area of social development, including the coverage and promotion of two major events scheduled for 1995, the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women. With regard to the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, DPI should step up its efforts to develop a strong public awareness campaign to promote the objectives of the Organization.

31. DPI should be given the opportunity to make a substantive input into peace-keeping operations by providing its professional resources and accumulated experience. Vigorous efforts should be made to that end in countries hosting peace-keeping operations and in troop-contributing countries. In that connection, he expressed his appreciation to the Secretary-General for the attention he had given to information issues within the United Nations system and for the positive boost which he intended to give activities in that area.

32. In his delegation's view, attention should be given during the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly to certain specific aspects of the activities of DPI. The first related to the publications of the United Nations: he recalled General Assembly resolution 47/73 B of 14 December 1992, in which DPI had been asked to continue its efforts to ensure timely production and dissemination of its mandated publications, in particular the UN Chronicle, the Yearbook of the United Nations, Development Forum and Africa Recovery. Moreover, it was disturbing to note the marginalization of economic and social development issues, which represented a priority in the Organization's work, while increased attention was being given to issues related to international peace. The second aspect concerned the United Nations information centres: the Group of 77

strongly favoured maintaining and further strengthening the network of information centres and recalled that, in resolution 47/73 B, the General Assembly had reaffirmed the role of the Committee on Information in the prior consideration of any proposal for the opening of new United Nations information centres. With regard to the third aspect, the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Group of 77 supported extending the fruitful cooperation between DPI and UNESCO, particularly with regard to the implementation of its International Programme for the Development of Communication. Welcoming the successful conclusion of the seminar on Media Development and Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Santiago de Chile from 2 to 6 May 1994, his delegation endorsed the proposal to organize a regional seminar for Arab States in 1995.

33. Ms. GRAEPP (Chile), supporting the statement by the representative of Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77, said that, as previously noted by the Permanent Representative of Chile, the new role which the United Nations was to play in the new world order necessitated broadening the concept of security to include, alongside military and strategic matters and issues of sovereignty, such aspects as the security of individuals, giving priority both to their welfare and to the welfare of their communities as prerequisites for political stability. International conferences and symposiums made a major contribution to the building of awareness in that area, by drawing attention to the urgent need to protect human rights and to secure the equality of women and rights of immigrants and refugees, by assisting in addressing population problems and mobilizing international efforts to eradicate extreme poverty, by creating employment opportunities, particularly for young people, and by eliminating violence. In that context, she particularly commended the work of DPI in keeping the public informed about the results of such forums. A useful initiative in that regard was the holding of regional round tables for journalists.

34. In May 1994, the Seminar on Media Development and Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean, organized by DPI, the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), had been held in Santiago, Chile. That successful Seminar would help fulfil expectations and hopes that had long been thwarted by the cold war. Similar regional seminars had been held in Africa in 1991 and in Asia in 1992, and he hoped that they would soon be held in the Arab States and Europe. The participants in the Santiago Seminar had confirmed that peace, development and democracy were intimately interlinked and had recognized the major role played by the media of the region in favour of peace, development and democracy throughout the world. The Seminar had adopted the Santiago Declaration and Plan of Action, which were contained in document A/49/472. In paragraph 10 of the Declaration, the participants called upon the General Assembly to create a "World Press Freedom Prize", to be awarded annually, to honour individuals, organizations or institutions that had contributed significantly to the advancement of freedom of information, irrespective of the medium, print or electronic. His delegation was currently holding consultations with other delegations with a view to preparing a draft resolution on the subject. He hoped that the General Assembly would take prompt action to adopt an appropriate

resolution that would enable the first award ceremony to be held during the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

35. The CHAIRMAN suggested that those delegations wishing to place their names on the list of speakers for the item under consideration should do so by 6 p.m. on Wednesday, 26 October. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the members of the Committee supported that suggestion.

36. It was so decided.

37. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the deadline for the submission of written views on documents A/C.4/49/2 and A/C.4/49/7 should be 6 p.m. on Thursday, 27 October. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the members of the Committee supported that suggestion.

38. It so was decided.

39. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to documents A/C.4/49/L.5-8 and said that the Committee would take decisions on the draft resolutions on items relating to decolonization on Friday, 28 October. While a number of delegations had requested him to proceed in that manner, other delegations had requested him to postpone decisions on those items. He encouraged interested delegations to hold consultations in order to harmonize their positions on the matter.

40. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) regretted that draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.5 on the question of Western Sahara had been distributed without prior consultation between the sponsors of the draft and his delegation. Unfortunately, the draft resolution did not reflect the views of his delegation and it was clearly aimed at destroying the consensus that had been achieved over the past five years. That was particularly disappointing since there had been recent progress in the implementation of the settlement plan for Western Sahara. He requested the Committee to postpone its decision on the draft resolution, which had been scheduled for Friday, 28 October, to a later date in order to preserve the consensus on the subject and, as a compromise, called upon all interested parties to participate in the drafting of a paragraph concerning the voluntary repatriation of people who had been kept against their will in the Tindouf camp.

41. Mr. LAMAMRA (Algeria) said that his delegation attached great importance to the Committee's consideration of draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.5 on the previously agreed date, namely Friday, 28 October. In his statement, the previous speaker had mentioned the town of Tindouf without specifying that it was situated in Algerian territory. Undoubtedly, the fact that the Government of Morocco had long refused to recognize that Tindouf belonged to Algeria explained why the previous speaker had insinuated that the Government of Algeria was detaining people there against their will. The falsity of that assertion could be confirmed by representatives of various non-governmental organizations and the media, who had considerably more freedom to carry out their activities there than they had in the territory that had been illegally occupied by Morocco. The draft resolution had been discussed at length with all interested delegations. The amendments to the draft that had been distributed by the delegation of

Morocco were not justified and eviscerated the contents of the draft. They had not received the least bit of support. Like other delegations, his delegation was naturally interested in a consensus; however, a consensus was simply impossible when unacceptable demands were being made. It was unlikely that the tenor of the amendments proposed by Morocco would change by Friday, and he proposed that the Committee should not accept Morocco's delaying tactics and take a decision on the matter on Friday, as had been planned.

42. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) said that everyone knew that Tindouf was an Algerian town in which there was a refugee camp. It was also widely known that Morocco had repeatedly requested that UNHCR should be allowed to visit Tindouf in order to obtain first-hand knowledge of the problems experienced by the camp's population and determine who wished to be repatriated. However, there had been no such cooperation. With regard to "territory that had been illegally occupied by Morocco", the Ambassador of Morocco had already said that Morocco was not a colonial Power. The United Nations had never considered Morocco to be a country that had illegally occupied that territory. It was up to the population of Western Morocco to decide whether to remain a part of Morocco or become independent. The amendments proposed by Morocco in no way distorted the contents of the draft resolution. The two principal amendments dealt with the question of a dialogue and its place in the draft resolution, and with the military and administrative problems involved in the implementation of the settlement plan. He regretted that the sponsors of the draft had not considered those amendments together with Morocco. He reiterated his request to hold consultations with a view to reaching a decision through consensus, without having to resort to a vote.

43. Mr. LAMAMRA (Algeria) said that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/49/L.5 had considered all constructive proposals. It was inadmissible for the Committee to postpone action on the draft. With regard to the refugees in Tindouf, he said that the relevant agreement had been signed with UNHCR and that the Secretary-General had visited the region many times. Instead of demonstrating its goodwill, Morocco was hindering the establishment of peace and harmony in the region. His delegation was convinced that the question of Western Sahara would be settled through the conduct of a genuine referendum, and not a sham one, which one party seemed intent on holding. With regard to the reference to a "colonial State", he had had in mind only the illegally occupied territory of Western Sahara, and Morocco's allegation about a completely different issue was proof of its unwillingness to achieve progress towards a solution of the question.

44. The CHAIRMAN said that the general discussion on questions relating to decolonization had been concluded.

45. Mr. ABDERAHMAN (Egypt) proposed that the Chairman should be given an opportunity to hold consultations with the interested parties with a view to achieving a consensus and should report on the outcome of his consultations at the meeting to be held the next morning.

46. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco), referring to the people who were being held in Tindouf against their will, said that he had not been referring to Algeria. With regard to the other issues raised by the representative of Algeria, particularly the question of a referendum, his delegation had complete confidence in the United Nations and the Secretary-General.

47. The CHAIRMAN, responding to the proposals made by the two previous speakers, said that he was willing to hold consultations with the interested parties and report on the outcome of the consultations at the meeting to be held the next morning.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

*Official Records*

SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE (FOURTH COMMITTEE)
11th meeting
held on
Thursday, 27 October 1994
at 10 a.m.
New York

# SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 11th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HUDYMA (Ukraine)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 80: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (continued)

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of the publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-794, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.4/49/SR.11
21 November 1994
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

94-81830 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 80: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (continued) (A/49/21, A/49/385, A/49/472)

1. Mr. MENKES (Russian Federation) said that the results of the work of the sixteenth session of the Committee on Information clearly demonstrated the seriousness and importance of the new tasks facing the international community in the sphere of information. Many of the participants at the Seminar held in May had rightly pointed to the significance of the current world-wide revolution in information and had underscored the powerful influence of information and its key role as an instrument for peace, democracy and development and for social, cultural, political and economic change.

2. The Russian Federation had firmly stated its adherence to the principles of freedom of information and freedom of the press. The convening, in Moscow, of an international conference on the mass media in a democratic society testified to how far Russia had progressed along the path of democratic development. The new Constitution of Russia expressly upheld the freedom of information and the independence of the mass media. Russia's current Constitution and the legislation being adopted by Russia on freedom of the mass media was in conformity with international standards. Russia would continue to proceed on the assumption that freedom of the mass media was a powerful means of building democratic institutions and a State governed by the rule of law, and of securing Russia's emergence as a civilized member of an international community that recognized universal human values and fundamental human rights and freedoms. In conjunction with the enactment of improved fundamental legislation, the Russian Federation was devoting considerable effort to achieving in practice the freedom of expression and of the mass media established by law, and to developing the appropriate systems of safeguards in such spheres as finance and property, and political, spiritual, cultural and organizational matters. It also had on its agenda the question of accelerating the entry into force of additional provisions governing legal protection for journalists.

3. One of the major problems facing the Russian mass media was that of securing their financial and economic independence. It involved the change in the form of ownership of the mass media and the need to adapt to the market economy.

4. His delegation noted with satisfaction that, at its spring session, the Committee on Information had successfully preserved the consensus which had characterized its work for several years, and expressed the hope that the Committee would continue to work on that basis. His delegation reiterated that it understood and sympathized with the concerns of the developing countries about the continuing imbalances in the field of information. His delegation was convinced that the best contribution towards solving that problem lay not in confrontation but in more active international cooperation.

5. With regard to the activities of the Department of Public Information, he said that, as was clear from the Secretary-General's report on questions relating to information (A/49/385), structural measures had been adopted to streamline the management of its operations. Work had been undertaken to improve the organizational structure of the Department, with the aim of establishing a clearer and more effective managerial structure. Thematically integrated priority areas, in which information played a substantive role, had been identified. Fragmentation and duplication must be avoided. Every effort was being made to maximize the involvement of the Department at the very beginning in the establishment of information components for peace-keeping.

6. The Russian Federation had previously expressed its wish for the information centre in Moscow to be more active. His delegation noted with satisfaction from the Secretary-General's report that the United Nations offices in a number of countries, including the Russian Federation, had "developed ways to reach out to the public they serve". The report contained specific guidelines for United Nations information activities in those States.

7. He took note of the work of the non-governmental organizations associated with the United Nations. They were a powerful channel for disseminating information on the United Nations, and he expressed his appreciation of the support given by the leadership of the Department to the proposition to hold, in Russia, a conference of non-governmental organizations within the Commonwealth of Independent States.

8. Cooperation between Russia and the United Nations in the provision of training for information specialists would very soon become more active; personnel from the Department of Information and the Press of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation would follow a one-month training course in the United Nations Department of Public Information. In general, Russia was prepared to do its utmost to assist in the development and adoption of the new approaches to information that would be required in order to provide objective information on the work and priorities of the United Nations to the broadest possible public, and in a manner that was acceptable and accessible to it.

9. Lastly, he said that the decisions of the Committee on Information and the report of the Secretary-General provided a sound basis for continued fruitful cooperation between the Department and the delegations of Member States in the area of information. The increase in the number of members of the Committee during the current year from 83 to 88 testified to the greater significance attached by States to information issues.

10. Mr. KOZIY (Ukraine) said that efforts to improve and add depth to United Nations information programmes and to shed light on problems related to peacemaking and economic and social development undoubtedly helped to create the indispensable conditions for establishing peace and for strengthening the link between peace-keeping operations and development-related aspects of post-conflict peace-building.

11. His delegation wished to mention the role played by the Organization in assisting the development of information structures in a number of countries. In that connection, the activities of the United Nations office in Ukraine, whose role included questions relating to information, deserved attention. The office kept track of the processes under way in Ukraine, advocated the democratic principles embodied in the Charter, disseminated information about the activities of the United Nations and the international community, and publicized democratic principles in the area of information, thereby making a valuable contribution to establishing Ukraine as a democratic State.

12. His delegation endorsed the Secretary-General's policy aimed at integrating information centres with United Nations offices on a case-by-case basis. Such an approach was the cheapest and most rational way of integrating the system of public information into the United Nations development system.

13. Development of the information infrastructure in Ukraine was an essential part of democratization, and Ukraine fully supported the principles of freedom of the press and of the dissemination of information.

14. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the proposal by Belarus concerning the develcpment and implementation of a system-wide programme for the tenth anniversary in 1996 of the Chernobyl disaster was included in draft resolution B in document A/49/21. His delegation believed that such a programme would contribute to a better understanding of the disaster and would serve as a warning for present and future generations.

15. Ukraine actively participated in United Nations peace-keeping operations and believed that the dissemination of information about the Organization's work in that area was of great importance both for the sides involved in a conflict and for those contributing personnel for peace-keeping operations. His delegation was of the view that the propagation of the ideals and principles of peacemaking should always be at the centre of the Committee's attention. In that connection, he commended the work of the Department in giving wide publicity to those operations.

16. The growing number of conflicts had led to an increase in casualties both among the peace-keeping personnel and the journalists working on the front line of the fiercest clashes. Article 79 of Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 was the only instrument dealing with the protection of journalists in armed conflicts. His delegation stressed the importance of the work relating to the protection of journalists in conflict zones being done in the Council of Europe. Ukraine believed that the United Nations could initiate the preparation of a legal instrument on the protection of journalists covering operations mandated by the United Nations. The valuable experience gained by the United Nations in elaborating the convention dealing with the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel, which was nearing completion, could prove very useful in that undertaking, and Ukraine declared itself ready to take part in the elaboration of such an instrument.

17. His delegation was pleased to note that the resolutions adopted by the Committee at its 1993 session were being given practical expression, enabling the Organization to disseminate information about its activities in a prompt, comprehensive and effective manner and to inform the public about its tasks and objectives.

18. Mr. ABDELLAH (Tunisia) said that, in the current era of profound political, economic and social change, information stood to play an increasingly important role in securing harmony and dialogue among peoples. All peoples should enjoy equal opportunities vis-à-vis the obtention and dissemination of balanced information. To that end, coordinated efforts were required, particularly from the developed countries of the North, to assist the developing countries in building their capacities and strengthening their information and communication infrastructure. It was essential to deploy adequate human resources and to transfer technology in the field of telecommunications. His delegation supported the idea of organizing a seminar on developing and promoting pluralistic media in the Arab countries under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), on the lines of those already held in Namibia, Kazakhstan and Chile.

19. His delegation welcomed the measures that had been taken to reorganize the Department and, in particular, to improve its publications on economic and social development matters. Those efforts must be increased, since development should be given the same priority as peace-keeping in the work of the United Nations. In that connection, the Department should make every effort to achieve the objectives set forth in the Secretary-General's report "An agenda for development". Primary attention should be given to the situation in Africa, and more publications should be devoted to the problems of African countries, particularly economic and social development matters and issues related to the conduct of international conferences on social development and the situation of women. As for the financing of those activities, the Department could redirect resources released by the elimination of apartheid in South Africa which had enabled it to wind up certain of its activities, and an appropriate decision should be adopted to that effect by the General Assembly.

20. With regard to the integration of certain United Nations information centres with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) field offices, Ukraine had studied with interest the information furnished by the Secretary-General in his latest report (A/49/385). If that measure was to be effective, prior consultations must be held with the Governments of the States concerned. Furthermore, those measures should be implemented in close cooperation with the Committee on Information.

21. Mr. DUMITRIU (Romania) said that the Department should be innovative in finding ways to assist the United Nations in meeting its challenges. All forms of inertia should be resisted: priorities should be kept under permanent review and constant efforts made to harmonize the objectives of information activities with those of the various bodies and States Members of the United Nations.

22. Continued efforts must be made to ensure the more effective use of resources by concentrating them on specific priorities and by streamlining the work of the operational structures. Efforts must also be made to identify more clearly the users of the information and to evaluate the results achieved. Every decision should take due account of the ratio between cost and benefit. Technological developments should be monitored and genuine partnership established with the media throughout the world. That also implied transparency and constructive dialogue with all media and efforts to ensure the accuracy of information disseminated through various channels. Information must be politically productive. The dissemination of information was not an end in itself but a means of promoting throughout the world certain values propagated by the United Nations.

23. Romania had on previous occasions declared its support for the Secretary-General's initiative designed to integrate United Nations information centres with other United Nations offices, provided that such integration would result in an improvement of or greater efficiency in the work of the Organization. Particular attention should be paid to the observance of such principles as the preservation of the functional autonomy of the information centres, the equitable disbursement of available resources, closer coordination with the Department and the adoption of a case-by-case approach in implementing the integration policy. While it supported integration, his delegation was also fully aware of its possible negative consequences. It had received assurances from the Department that there was no intention to downgrade the centre in Romania or to diminish the support it had enjoyed thus far.

24. With regard to the role of media and other institutions in a democratic society, he stressed that the dismantling of the totalitarian structures in Romania had been followed by the rapid growth of independent, pluralistic media. Romanian media currently played an important role in the public debate on economic reform and political life. The media had increased their role as the main recipient and disseminator of information, both at the domestic and the international level. That role clearly implied greater responsibilities. In that connection, he stressed that the partnership between the United Nations and the media in general should also extend to a special relationship between the Department and the media in individual countries. The United Nations and the free press should jointly promote the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, commitments to international peace and security and democratic values. The success of many United Nations peace-keeping operations or major United Nations programmes in economic, social and environmental areas largely depended on their impact on public opinion in democratic societies. The media should have at their disposal accurate and objective information since that was crucial to its efforts to influence political decisions.

25. Mr. ALVAREZ (Uruguay) said that the Uruguayan delegation had studied the report of the Committee on Information on the work of its sixteenth session with interest. It had taken an active part in recent sessions of the Committee because it recognized how important the concepts described in the report were in view of the Committee's area of activity and its impact on various United Nations undertakings.

26. It was appropriate to draw attention to various matters contained in the report. The activities of the Department of Public Information in connection with peace-keeping operations warranted praise, and it should be noted that those activities were not carried out to the detriment of the dissemination of information about developmental and other social and economic issues. Particularly important was the effort to provide the necessary components in peace-keeping operations, including press and public relations components in the case of major operations with broad mandates and large contingents of civil and military staff. That would facilitate the dissemination of objective information about peace-keeping operations and thereby prevent any erosion of the confidence of Member States in the proposed settlement option.

27. The delegation of Uruguay was glad that the Department was continuing to publicize the measures taken in connection with the forthcoming World Summit on Social Development and that the proposal made at the previous session for the appointment of a coordinator for humanitarian questions had been implemented. Uruguay also noted with satisfaction the decision to integrate United Nations information centres with UNDP field offices, but in that undertaking it was important for the views of the host countries to be taken into account and for the reports on the topic submitted by the Secretary-General to the Committee on Information to contain the detailed information and documentation needed for the adoption of the corresponding decisions. Action should be taken only after preliminary consultations and notification of the Member States which determined policy in that area.

28. Caution must be exercised with regard to the establishment of new United Nations information centres and due account must be taken of the requirements of different regions. It might be possible to study alternative solutions, perhaps involving the use of local facilities and staff. An example of an alternative solution was provided by the University for Peace in Costa Rica. When considering such alternatives it was essential to put forward financially viable proposals in order to avoid situations in which the decision to open an information centre was determined by the availability, or otherwise, of funds.

29. Mr. MAXIMOV (Bulgaria) said that the dissemination and free exchange of accurate, impartial and objective information was central to the building of confidence and understanding among peoples and States, as well as to the preservation of international peace and security. Bulgaria, having set out on the path to democracy and a market economy, had already incorporated the fundamental human rights and freedoms in its new constitution and in a number of legislative acts, in particular the right to obtain and disseminate information and the freedom of expression and opinion, thus establishing the necessary conditions for the diversification of its media and creating an information system based on democratic principles and freedoms. That was a further illustration of Bulgaria's firm commitment to the ideals and goals of the United Nations and of its intention to become a full member of the world democratic community.

30. Bulgaria wished to commend the positive role of the United Nations information system in promoting democratization in the countries in transition.

It was also well aware of the needs of the developing countries and of their problems, particularly in the area of information. In that connection, special attention and support should be given to the activities designed to help the developing countries undertaken by UNESCO under its international programme for the development of communication. The Bulgarian delegation welcomed the innovative and comprehensive conceptual approach to the various information tasks described by the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information at the sixteenth session of the Committee on Information. It also welcomed the structural and organizational changes made in the Department in order to secure further streamlining, rationalization and renewal of the information activities of the United Nations and make most effective use of the meagre resources available. The Department must periodically review its priorities in its information activities and redeploy human and financial resources accordingly, concentrating them on the higher-priority areas of activity. One such area was the increased involvement of the United Nations in preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peacemaking. Bulgaria favoured the idea of incorporating an information component at the planning stage of any peace-keeping operation and of the appointment of a spokesperson for every larger operation.

31. Bulgaria was convinced of the paramount importance of the United Nations information centres in enhancing the role and image of the Organization and supported their integration with UNDP field offices, provided that the functional autonomy of the information components was preserved; it reiterated its interest in establishing such an information component in the UNDP office in Sofia.

32. Mr. RI Song Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that the international community realized the important role of public information in the establishment of the new international political and economic order and attached great importance to the creation of a new international information and communication order; his delegation appreciated the contribution of the Department of Public Information and the Committee on Information to that undertaking. It was important to stress that the Department had improved the standards of journalists and broadcasters from developing countries by organizing seminars on information topics and offering the participants ample opportunities to extend their contacts and cooperation. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea welcomed the Department's plan to issue, at the beginning of 1995 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, a handbook on the publishing and press organizations of the countries of the world, for that would promote stronger contacts and cooperation between such organizations. The Committee on Information also deserved commendation for its review and evaluation of information policy in the United Nations system and for its recommendations on information made in response to the changing situation.

33. However, in the field of information and communications some imbalance still existed between developing and developed countries. The latter had a monopoly of modern information technology, which they used to spread their doctrines and cultural values and distorted information reflecting their interests. His delegation considered that the matter should be discussed under the current agenda item, and that the United Nations should take action in that

regard. In order to redress the imbalance and ensure that information served the whole of humanity, priority should be given to restructuring the current information system and establishing a new world information and communication order.

34. His delegation considered it essential to strengthen and expand the network of United Nations information centres, and to give serious consideration to the views of the countries concerned on the question of integrating those centres with the UNDP offices. The Organization should also pay due attention to the improvement and enhancement of the information infrastructure and to the training of technicians and experts from the developing countries. Moreover, his delegation attached great importance to the promotion of close cooperation among Member States, in particular with a view to diversifying information and improving its methods of dissemination. In that connection, he recalled the Pyongyang Declaration, adopted at the fourth Conference of Ministers of Information of the Non-Aligned Countries, held in Pyongyang in June 1993.

35. In future, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would establish its own sound national information base and promote cooperation and exchanges with the United Nations and with information organs in other countries, thereby fulfilling its obligations with regard to the establishment of a new world information and communication order.

36. Mr. PRASAD YADAVA (Nepal) said that in the changed world of the post-cold-war era, the United Nations stood at the forefront of communication media. The international press and the public at large had taken a keen interest in the activities of the Organization and looked to it with hope and aspiration. That was largely because of its growing role not only as an instrument of peace, democracy and development, but also as the driving force behind social, cultural, political and economic change. In that connection, DPI, as the principal communication arm of the United Nations, had to assume new responsibilities in managing, coordinating and disseminating the free flow of information, covering all the activities carried out by the United Nations. The Department must have the necessary material resources and qualified staff at its disposal, and he expressed satisfaction at the current restructuring of DPI activities, which should make it more effective in the new environment.

37. His delegation considered that DPI should provide information regarding peace-keeping operations on a continuing basis and appreciated the fact that it was providing a full range of information on such matters, for the success of such operations largely depended on how they were perceived by the international community, both in the troop-contributing countries and in those in which the missions were conducted. Equally important was coordination between DPI and the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, and he welcomed the steps that had already been taken by DPI in that direction.

38. In order to ensure the effective and rational use of the resources at its disposal, DPI should reassess its priorities. Since the United Nations had recently been focusing attention on social, cultural, political and economic issues, trying to reach as many people as possible, greater use should be made

of non-governmental organizations as another effective channel for disseminating such information at the grass-roots level. His delegation fully supported the idea of DPI bringing out publications of that kind in local languages and was gratified that "An Agenda for Peace" had been issued in the Nepali language.

39. Radio was an extremely cost-effective means of reaching a wide audience. He therefore appreciated the Department's assurance that it intended to expand its partnership with Member States in the preparation and distribution of radio products. It was for that reason that his delegation requested the inclusion of information in the Nepali language in the United Nations radio programme.

40. Mr. Myung Hwan YU (Republic of Korea) said that access to the free flow of information was a legitimate right of all peoples of the world. In the context of the goals of the United Nations, the free exchange of information was one of the fundamental ways of building mutual understanding and tolerance among peoples of different ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds.

41. However, as long as there were disparities between the developed and developing countries in the field of information technology and human resources, the international community could not fully benefit from the exchange of information. In his delegation's view, the international community should continue to make financial contributions and provide technological support to the developing countries in order to promote the exchange of information with the developed world. At the same time, DPI which was the focal point of information activities in the United Nations, should strengthen its cooperation with UNDP, UNICEF and other United Nations bodies. The Government of the Republic of Korea, which was a strong advocate of "South-South" cooperation, would continue its efforts to help to initiate and build communication projects for developing countries through its Economic Development and Cooperation Fund. It would also maintain its annual contribution to the Trust Fund of the UNESCO International Programme for the Development of Communication, as well as its interest in the Training Programmes which had been launched in 1984 with a view to promoting technology sharing with other developing countries.

42. With regard to DPI, his delegation considered that its activities had made a favourable impact on public opinion concerning peace-keeping operations, especially in the troop-contributing States. However, there was still room for improvement in that area, particularly in providing better information to the local population in countries hosting peace-keeping missions. As for the Weekly Digest on the activities of United Nations peace-keeping missions, a publication of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations which had been discontinued because of staff problems, he expressed the hope that it would be resumed in future.

43. His delegation noted with satisfaction the enhanced coverage of development-related issues by DPI. The Department should endeavour to strike a reasonable balance between peace-keeping and security matters and development issues. He commended the efforts of DPI to integrate the United Nations information centres with the UNDP offices, on a case-by-case basis and in close

consultation with the Governments concerned, and he reiterated his request that DPI strengthen its activities in the Republic of Korea.

44. Since the previous year the Government of the Republic of Korea had been engaged in a vigorous national reform campaign aimed at improving the quality of life in the country. One of the key elements in the campaign was the active and open participation of the general public and the mass media. In that connection, the Government had been eagerly pursuing information-sharing programmes with other Governments and with the private sector. His delegation wished to point out that there were still some countries which remained in a state of self-imposed isolation and where freedom of the press was infringed upon or totally suppressed. The Government of the Republic of Korea called on the international community to make greater efforts to ensure that the citizens of those countries were able to enjoy their basic human rights and live in a more open society.

45. Mr. DOUGLAS (United States of America) said that now that the cold war had ended, the international community had a unique opportunity to ensure the free flow of information, which was vital to the needs of open societies. Freedom of the press and freedom of expression were essential to democracy and to shaping the world of the twenty-first century. The right of the individual to seek, receive and impart information without interference was a fundamental human right. Peace-keeping had become a large part of United Nations operations, and public information was an important component of that function. It must therefore be ensured that public information was integrated into all peace-keeping efforts.

46. The Department of Public Information had accomplished a great deal in its work. The issues that the Department worked on ranged from peace-keeping operations to economic and social development and to the advancement of human rights and of the status of women.

47. His delegation was gratified by the Assistant Secretary-General's indication that in its quest for innovative and cost-effective ways of delivering the United Nations message, the Department of Public Information had been greatly assisted by the statements made by members of the Committee on Information. His delegation considered financial reform in the United Nations to be a top priority and looked forward to continuing to prune unnecessary costs and to shifting resources to where they were most needed. Integrating United Nations information centres with United Nations field offices was an excellent example of positive direction in that regard.

48. The United States of America remained firmly committed to efforts to revitalize management, evaluate and streamline the Department of Public Information and reallocate resources based on the current needs of the United Nations. In the area of specific programme activities, it felt that the Committee on Information could assist the Department in adopting difficult management decisions, identifying priorities and helping to locate the resources to meet them; support the Assistant Secretary-General's call for flexibility with a view to effective operation; and strengthen the public affairs and

information component in peace-keeping and involve the Department in discussions with experts regarding peace-keeping operations.

49. Mr. BATAINEH (Jordan) said that information was an important means of socio-cultural progress and also an instrument of peace. Freedom of the press and of information was a guarantee of all other freedoms. In that respect, access to the mass media was of particular importance. The existing information system must be reviewed in order to eliminate the remaining shortcomings. Developed and developing countries needed an information system which would make it possible to report on events in a balanced and objective manner. It was to be hoped that developed countries, because of their strong resource potential, would help developing countries acquire technological means for the transmission, collection and dissemination of information, which would help overcome the gap between them.

50. Jordan recognized that the Department of Public Information played an important and effective role in the work of the United Nations and endeavoured to report on the problems facing the Organization in an objective and impartial manner. He hoped that the Department would take steps to improve the dissemination of information about the work of the United Nations among the public. The United Nations was not only an instrument of peace, but also a body concerned with solving problems of social, economic and humanitarian development.

51. The Department should review its priorities and take into account the changes which had taken place in the world, particularly in the light of events in the Middle East. Peace-keeping operations must be covered in such a way as to give the public a correct idea of the nature, goals and purposes of such operations, especially in the regions where they were being carried out and in the countries which were providing military contingents. Jordan greatly valued the role of UNESCO, which, along with the Department, was implementing the International Programme for the Development of Communication, and also attached great importance to the organization of seminars on the mass media, which helped strengthen the principle of the freedom and pluralism of the press. The organization at Sana'a of a seminar for Arab countries on public information questions would also contribute to that goal.

52. Jordan agreed that the United Nations information centres were communications channels which enabled people in different countries to become acquainted with the work and goals of international organizations and therefore supported steps to strengthen the centres in the context of the reorganization of the work of the United Nations. The old system of geographical distribution of the centres must also be reviewed. In that connection Jordan, as an active participant in peace-keeping operations, was very interested in the opening of an information centre in Amman and counted on the Committee's support in that matter.

53. Mr. ALSAIDI (Yemen) said that his delegation supported the statement made by the Chairman of the Group of 77; he would therefore confine himself to some points of particular interest to Yemen.

54. Since its reunification in 1990, Yemen had upheld the right of its citizens to the free flow of information, freedom of thought and assembly and the freedom to choose among political parties. Hence Yemen, a multiparty State, had one of the freest presses in the Arab world. The internal difficulties experienced by Yemen during the course of the year had been exploited by external forces with the objective of impeding the development of a free, democratic and prosperous society in Yemen. It was quite clear how biased and subjective the reporting by some of the Arab press of the events in Yemen had been. In contrast, the Western press, which was constantly accused of lacking in objectivity, had been far more objective and honest.

55. His delegation commended the decision of the Department of Public Information and UNESCO to hold a seminar on promoting independent and pluralistic Arab media at Sana'a in 1995. The continued cooperation between the Department and UNESCO in the implementation of the International Programme for the Development of Communication was essential.

56. The Department of Public Information should continue its valuable programme on the Palestine question. The progress made recently towards peace in the Middle East was another argument in favour of opening a United Nations information centre at Amman.

57. Mr. KARSGAARD (Canada) thanked the Assistant Secretary-General for his efforts to improve the efficiency of the Department of Public Information (DPI). The demands for information about the work of the United Nations could be met within a fixed budget through adaptation to new technologies that permitted the dissemination of large amounts of information as well as the targeting of key audiences.

58. Ideally, information should help bridge the gap between reality and perception. A well-presented fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations would highlight the Organization's accomplishments and contribute to a better understanding of its activities.

59. In spite of information campaigns on the range of United Nations priorities, public perception of the Organization in Canada and many other countries was shaped largely by its performance where blue berets were deployed. For that reason, his delegation welcomed the increased attention given by DPI to peace-keeping in recent years and encouraged it to continue its efforts in that field.

60. His delegation believed that DPI could do more than simply foster better public understanding of peace-keeping. It could help to make peace-keeping operations a success. In that regard, radio played a special role; for example, in the case of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), radio had contributed to the holding of a democratic election. That was also true of the operation in Rwanda where, without a radio station, the United Nations would not have been able to counter the propaganda broadcast by Radio Mille Collines. His delegation considered that information activities should be fully incorporated into the original concept of every operation. DPI had a role

to play in providing expert advice on how to tailor such activities in order to maximize the effectiveness of United Nations peace-keeping operations and help gain the support of the Security Council, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Fifth Committee.

61. DPI should contribute to the significant enhancement of the press and public information function for peace-keeping missions and in particular for rapid deployment at the start of a peace-keeping operation of a robust and professional media outreach programme. The resources freed as a result of the eradication of apartheid could be used to settle remaining conflicts. In Haiti, for example, the United Nations had missed an opportunity to promote democratic development when it had not provided assistance in establishing a radio station.

62. Mr. MOUBARAK (Lebanon) said that information was the key to success in any endeavour - political, economic, social, cultural or technological. The lack of information not only lead to criticism and misunderstanding but also resulted in untruths and disinformation, which were even more harmful and disruptive. The achievements of the United Nations and its specialized agencies would go unnoticed and unfulfilled without the excellent work of its communication arm, namely, DPI and the United Nations information centres. In particular, the United Nations Information Centre in Beirut had operated throughout the entire war. DPI and its branches played a vital role in the modern information network, providing a global forum in a rapidly changing world. His delegation was looking forward to the convening of a seminar in the Arab countries in 1995 with a view to promoting the independence and pluralism of the media. On the subject of merging the informational activities of United Nations information centres and UNDP offices abroad, his delegation believed that those offices should remain independent of one another. The strengthening of United Nations information centres could promote the Organization's goals of cooperation among States, international security, sustainable development and environmental protection.

63. Lebanon had been a pioneer in the field of information in the Middle East. The first newspaper in Lebanon was founded in 1814. Moreover, Lebanon had also played a major role in the Arab renaissance movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Beirut had remained the publishing capital of the Arab world. The Government of Lebanon was aware that an advanced information structure was the key to economic and cultural success. The Lebanese Parliament had adopted, the previous week, a new law on the media that ensured freedom of expression and at the same time ended the anarchy of the press that had often prevailed during the war. Coverage of information on the developing countries must improve. Unfortunately, developing countries did not have the same access to world press coverage as did developed countries. As freedom and the flow of information spread throughout the world, international peace and security would prevail. To that end, United Nations goals must be publicized in both developed and developing countries.

64. Mr. JELBAN (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) commended the current activities of DPI and drew attention to the need to improve its financing in order to enable it to achieve even greater success. The Department should endeavour to help the

developing countries establish a new information order. While his delegation upheld freedom of the press and the media, it noted at the same time that the media could become a dangerous political instrument that could be used to manipulate public opinion and interfere in the internal affairs of other States and encroach on their independence and sovereignty. One example of that was the information campaign against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya that was being waged by several countries, in particular the United States of America, which had unjustly accused the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya of aiding and abetting terrorism. Such campaigns were conducted not for propaganda purposes alone but could also be used to prepare for aggression, as in the case of the attack on the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in 1986.

65. His delegation hoped that the United Nations would play a more effective role in mobilizing the international community's support in solving such priority issues as the question of Palestine, the occupied Arab territories, the recovery of the developing countries' economies, environmental protection and so on. He welcomed the positive role of UNESCO in increasing opportunities in the field of communication, which helped bridge the gap between the developed and the developing countries in the dissemination of information. At the same time, his delegation commended the work of the United Nations information centres, which should be supported in every way possible, since those centres provided a link between the United Nations and local media and helped strengthen the Organization's prestige. The question of merging the United Nations information centres with UNDP offices should be decided on the basis of the specific conditions in each individual case in order to ensure that such a merger did not have an adverse effect on the very different kinds of activities in which the information centres and the UNDP offices were engaged. Finally, he thanked the United Nations Library for its help in conducting research and carrying out other activities.

66. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee would continue its consideration of the item at its next meeting and that he would invite the Committee to take decisions on draft resolutions on items relating to decolonization. He drew attention to document A/C.4/49/L.9, which indicated the order in which the Committee would take decisions on those resolutions. Consultations were continuing on the draft resolution on the question of Western Sahara. The sponsors of that draft had requested the Committee to take a decision on the draft resolution on the following day, and he intended to invite the Committee to take a decision on the draft at its next meeting. If he heard no comments, he would take it that the Committee had no objection to the proposed organization of work.

67. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.